READINGS IN MEDIEVAL AND MODERN HISTORY

WEBSTER

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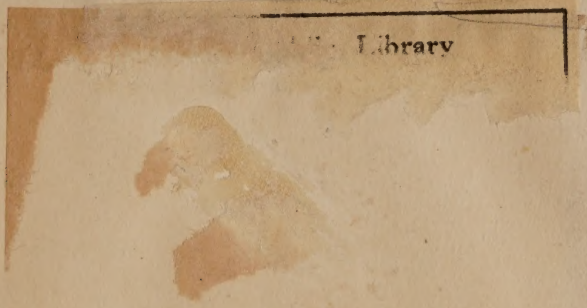

READINGS IN MEDIEVAL AND MODERN HISTORY

BY

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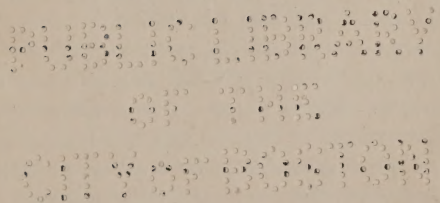
"*If any study is liberal and liberalizing, it is the modern study of history.*"

— CHARLES W. ELIOT,
Educational Reform.



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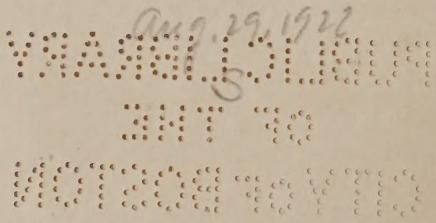

PREFACE

THIS volume is intended to provide sufficient supplementary reading, chiefly of a biographical or narrative character, for a high-school course in medieval and modern history. The arrangement of the volume is the same as that of my earlier *Readings in Ancient History*. Each chapter deals with a single epoch or personality and presents the work of a single author. The passages quoted are long enough to make a definite impression on the reader, thus avoiding the scrappy effect necessarily produced by a set of short, unrelated extracts. Since many of the selections are good literature as well as good history, I hope that students will be tempted to turn to the original sources from which excerpts have been taken, and to read in them at length for their own enjoyment.

Several chapters of the book (notably III, VI, XXIII, XXV, XXVI, XXX, XXXII, and XXXV) deserve careful examination and analysis in the classroom. They may be made the basis for simple exercises in historical method. Chapters XXV and XXVI, XXX and XXXI, and XXXII and XXXIII furnish material for useful comparative studies, showing how differently the same facts may be viewed by different men. Teachers will also find in the table of contents and in the index entries many subjects for oral reports or essays.

I have tried to present the best translations, whenever a choice between versions was open to me, to simplify or modernize the language, when involved or archaic, and to supply each selection with such comments and notes as seem indispensable for its understanding. All important omissions have been carefully indicated.

It would not have been possible to present so rich a collection of historical readings without the generous coöperation of many publishers, both in this country and in England. My obligations are the following: to Harper and Brothers, for the passages from Bismarck's *Autobiography;* to Charles Scribner's Sons, for those from the *Memoirs* of Chancellor Pasquier and Prince Metternich; to Macmillan and Company, for those from the *Speeches and Table-talk of*

the Prophet Mohammad and the *Letters of Martin Luther;* to George Bell and Sons, for those from Glaister's translation of Einhard, Pepys's *Diary*, and Arthur Young's *Travels in France;* to Chatto and Windus, for those from their "King's Classics" series (*Rule of St. Benedict, English Correspondence of St. Boniface, Asser's Life of King Alfred, Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond,* and *Song of Roland*); to Longmans, Green, and Company, for those from the *Epistles of Erasmus*, edited by F. M. Nichols; to Philip Lee Warner, publisher to the Medici Society, for those from Vasari's *Lives;* to John Murray, for those from Sir Henry Yule's edition of Marco Polo; to Methuen and Company, for those from Lomas's edition of Carlyle's *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell;* to the Walter Scott Publishing Company, for those from Harrison's *Elizabethan England;* to Chapman and Hall, for those from Bingham's edition of the *Letters and Despatches of the First Napoleon;* and to George Allen and Unwin, for those from *Beowulf*. The translations from the *Heimskringla*, the *Little Flowers of St. Francis*, the *Nibelungenlied;* and the chronicles of Villehardouin and Joinville are used through an agreement with J. M. Dent and Sons. Finally, I owe to Mr. W. D. Foulke, the translator, and to the Department of History, University of Pennsylvania, the publisher, my permission to use the selections from Paul the Deacon's *History of the Langobards*.

HUTTON WEBSTER

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA,
May, 1917

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READINGS IN MEDIEVAL AND MODERN HISTORY

CHAPTER I

STORIES OF THE LOMBARD KINGS[1]

PAUL the Deacon (in Latin, *Paulus Diaconus*), the historian of the Lombards, himself belonged to a noble Lombard family. Like so many medieval writers he was a monk. While an inmate of the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino in Italy, he made the acquaintance of Charlemagne, who was attracted by his literary attainments. He passed several years at the court of the Frankish ruler and assisted in the Carolingian revival of learning. Paul's most important composition is the *History of the Langobards*, in six books. It begins with the year 568, when the Lombards entered Italy, and extends to the death of King Liutprand, in 747. The work forms a valuable source for the history of the early Middle Ages.

1. Alboin and Turisind[2]

The Lombards first invaded Italy under their king Alboin. As a young man and before attaining the throne, he had warred victoriously with another Germanic tribe, the Gepidæ.

When battle was joined, while both lines fought bravely and neither yielded to the other, it happened that in the midst of the struggle Alboin, the son of Audoin, and Turismod, the son of Turisind, encountered each other. Alboin, striking

[1] *History of the Langobards by Paul the Deacon*, translated by W. D. Foulke. Philadelphia, 1907. Department of History, University of Pennsylvania.

[2] Paul the Deacon, *Historia gentis Langobardorum*, i, 23–24.

the other with his sword, hurled him headlong from his horse to destruction. The Gepidæ, seeing that the king's son was killed, through whom in great part the war had been set on foot, at once started to flee. The Lombards sharply followed them up, overthrew them, and when many had been killed turned back to take off the spoils of the dead.

When, after the victory had been won, the Lombards returned to their own abodes, they suggested to their king Audoin that Alboin, by whose valor they had won the victory in the fight, should become his table companion, so that he who had been a comrade to his father in danger should also be a comrade at the feast. Audoin answered them that he could by no means do this, lest he should break the usage of the nation. "You know," he said, "that it is not the custom among us that the son of the king should eat with his father, unless he first receives his arms from the king of a foreign nation."

When he heard these things from his father, Alboin, taking only forty young men with him, journeyed to Turisind, king of the Gepidæ, with whom he had before waged war, and explained the reason for his visit. The king, receiving him kindly, invited him to his table and placed him on his right hand, where Turismod, his former son, had been wont to sit. In the meantime, while the various dishes were made ready, Turisind, reflecting that his son had sat there only a little while before, and recalling to mind the death of his child and beholding his slayer present and sitting in his place, drew deep sighs and could not contain himself. At last his grief broke forth into utterance. "This place," he said, "is dear to me, but the person who sits in it is grievous enough to my sight." Then another son of the king, who was present, aroused by his father's speech, began to provoke the Lombards with insults, declaring (because they wore white bandages from their calves down) that they were like mares with white feet up to the legs, and saying, "The mares that you take after have fetlocks." Then one of the Lombards thus answered, "Go to the field of Asfeld and there you can find beyond a doubt how stoutly

those whom you call mares succeed in kicking; there the bones of your brother are scattered in the midst of the meadows like those of a vile beast."

When they heard these things, the Gepidæ, unable to bear the tumult of their passions, violently stirred in anger and strove to avenge the open insult. The Lombards, ready for the fray, all laid their hands on the hilts of their swords. The king, leaping forth from the table, thrust himself into their midst and restrained his people from anger and strife. He threatened to punish him who first engaged in fight, and said that it is a victory not pleasing to God when anyone kills his guest in his own house. Thus at last the quarrel having been allayed, they now finished the banquet with joyful spirits. And Turisind, taking up the arms of Turismod his son, delivered them to Alboin and sent him back in peace and safety to his father's kingdom. Alboin, having returned to his father, was made from that time his table companion. And when he joyfully partook with his father of the royal delicacies, he related in order all the things which had happened to him among the Gepidæ in the palace of Turisind. Those who were present were astonished and applauded the boldness of Alboin, nor did they less extol in their praises the most honorable behavior of Turisind.

2. Assassination of Alboin[1]

After Alboin had ruled in Italy three years and six months, he was slain by the treachery of his wife. The cause of his murder was this: While he sat in merriment at a banquet at Verona longer than was proper, with the cup which he had made of the skull of his father-in-law, King Cunimund,[2] he ordered it to be given to the queen to drink wine, and he invited her to drink merrily with her father. Lest this should seem impossible to anyone, I speak the truth in Christ. I

[1] Paul the Deacon, *Historia gentis Langobardorum*, ii, 28–29.

[2] Cunimund, who succeeded Turisind as king of the Gepidæ, had been defeated and killed by Alboin in 566 or 567. Cunimund's daughter, Rosemund, was then carried away captive by Alboin, who afterwards married her.

saw King Ratchis holding this cup in his hand on a certain festal day to show it to his guests. Then Rosemund, when she heard the thing, conceived in her heart deep anguish she could not restrain, and straightway she burned to revenge the death of her father by the murder of her husband. Presently she formed a plan with Helmechis, who was the king's armor-bearer and his foster brother, to kill the king. . . .

Rosemund, while Albion had given himself up to a noonday sleep, ordered that there should be a great silence in the palace. Then, taking away all other arms, she bound his sword tightly to the head of the bed so it could not be taken away or unsheathed and . . . let in Helmechis, the murderer. Alboin, suddenly aroused from sleep, perceived the evil which threatened and reached his hand quickly for his sword, which, being tightly tied, he could not draw, yet he seized a foot-stool and defended himself with it for some time. But unfortunately this most warlike and very brave man, being helpless against his enemy, was slain as if he were one of no account, and he who was most famous in war, through the overthrow of so many enemies, perished by the scheme of one little woman. . . .

Helmechis, upon the death of Alboin, attempted to usurp his kingdom, but he could not do this at all, because the Lombards, grieving greatly for the king's death, strove to make away with him. And straightway Rosemund sent word to Longinus, prefect of Ravenna, that he should quickly send a ship to fetch them. Longinus, delighted by such a message, sent a ship in which Helmechis with Rosemund, his wife, embarked at night. They took with them the daughter of the king and all the treasure of the Lombards, and came swiftly to Ravenna.

Then the prefect Longinus began to urge Rosemund to kill Helmechis and to join him in wedlock. As she was ready for every kind of wickedness, and as she desired to become mistress of the people of Ravenna, she gave her consent to the accomplishment of this great crime. While Helmechis was bathing himself, she offered him, as he came out of the bath, a cup of poison, which she said was for his health. But when he felt

that he had drunk the cup of death, he compelled Rosemund, having drawn his sword upon her, to drink what was left, and thus these most wicked murderers perished at one moment by the judgment of God Almighty.

3. Authari and Theudelinda [1]

Paul the Deacon tells how the Lombard king, Authari, wooed and won a Bavarian bride.

King Authari sent ambassadors to Bavaria to ask for him in marriage the daughter of Garibald, their king. The latter received them kindly and promised that he would give his daughter, Theudelinda, to Authari. And when the ambassadors on their return announced these things to Authari, he desired to see his betrothed for himself. Bringing with him a few active men of the Lombards, and also taking along with him, as their chief, one who was most faithful to him, he set forth without delay for Bavaria. When they had been led into the presence of King Garibald, according to the custom of ambassadors, and when he who had come with Authari as their chief had made the usual speech after salutation, Authari, since he was known to none of that nation, came nearer to King Garibald and said, "My master, King Authari, has sent me specially to look upon your daughter, his betrothed, who is to be our mistress, so that I may be able to tell my lord more surely what is her appearance."

When the king, hearing these things, had commanded his daughter to come, Authari gazed upon her with silent approval, since she was of a very beautiful figure and pleased him much in every way. He then said to the king, "Since we see that the person of your daughter is such that we may properly wish her to become our queen, we would like, if it please your mightiness, to take a cup of wine from her hand, as she will offer it to us hereafter." When the king had assented, she took the cup of wine and gave it first to him who appeared to be the chief.

[1] Paul the Deacon, *Historia gentis Langobardorum*, iii, 30.

Then when she offered it to Authari, whom she did not know was her affianced bridegroom, he, after drinking and returning the cup, touched her hand with his finger, when no one noticed, and drew his right hand from his forehead along his nose and face. Covered with blushes, she told this to her nurse, and her nurse said to her, "Unless this man was the king himself and thy promised bridegroom, he would not dare by any means to touch thee. But meanwhile, lest this become known to thy father, let us be silent, for in truth the man is a worthy person, who deserves to have a kingdom and be united with thee in wedlock." For Authari, indeed, was then in the bloom of his youth, of fine stature, covered with yellow hair, and very comely in appearance.

Having received an escort from the king, they presently took their way to return to their own country. . . . Then Authari, when he had come near the boundaries of Italy and had with him the Bavarians who up to this time were conducting him, raised himself as much as he could upon the horse he was managing, and with all his strength drove a hatchet into a tree that stood near by, adding these words, "Authari is wont to strike such a blow." And when he had said these things, then the Bavarians who accompanied him understood that he was himself King Authari. After some time, when trouble had come to King Garibald on account of an invasion by the Franks, Theudelinda, his daughter, fled to Italy and announced to Authari, her promised bridegroom, that she was coming. And he straightway went forth to meet her with a great train to celebrate the nuptials in the field of Sardis, which is above Verona, and received her in marriage amid the rejoicing of all. . . .

4. A Miracle [1]

King Rothari, after he had held the sovereignty sixteen years and four months, departed from life and left the kingdom of the Lombards to his son Rodoald. After he had been buried near the church of St. John the Baptist, a certain man, inflamed

[1] Paul the Deacon, *Historia gentis Langobardorum*, iv, 47.

by wicked cupidity, opened his sepulcher at night and took away whatever he found among the ornaments of the body. St. John, appearing to him in a vision, frightened him dreadfully and said to him, "Why did you dare to touch the body of that man? Although he may not have been of the true faith, yet he has commended himself to me. Because you have presumed to do this thing, you will never hereafter have admission into my church." And so it occurred; for as often as he wished to enter the sanctuary of St. John, straightway his throat would be hit as if by a very powerful boxer, and thus stricken, he would suddenly fall down backwards. I speak the truth in Christ; he who saw with his own eyes that very thing done related it to me.

5. A Knightly Exploit

During the reign of King Grimuald, the eastern emperor, Constantine IV, made an effort to recover his Italian territories from the hands of the Lombards.

After the emperor came to Naples it is said that one of his chief men, whose name was Saburrus, asked for twenty thousand soldiers from his sovereign, and pledged himself to fight against Grimuald and win the victory. And when he had received the troops and had come to a place whose name is Forinus and had set up his camp there, Grimuald wanted to march against him. His son, Romuald, said to him, "There is no need, but do you turn over to me only a part of your army. With God's favor I will fight with him, and when I shall have conquered him a greater glory, indeed, will be ascribed to your power." It was done, and when he had received some part of his father's army, he set out with his own men likewise against Saburrus.

Before he began the battle with Saburrus, he ordered the trumpets to sound on four sides, and immediately he rushed daringly upon the foe. While both lines were fighting with great obstinacy, a Lombard, named Amalong, who had been

[1] Paul the Deacon, *Historia gentis Langobardorum*, v, 10.

accustomed to carry the royal pike, taking this pike in both hands, struck violently with it a certain little Greek and lifted him from the saddle on which he was riding and raised him in the air over his head. When the army of the Greeks saw this, it was terrified and at once betook itself to flight. . . . Thus Saburrus, who had promised that he would achieve for his emperor a trophy of victory from the Lombards, returned to him with a few men only and came off with disgrace. Romuald, when the victory was obtained from the enemy, returned in triumph and brought joy to his father and safety to all, now that the fear of the enemy was taken away.

6. King Liutprand [1]

When King Liutprand had been confirmed in the royal power, Rothari, a blood relation of his, wished to kill him. He prepared a banquet for him in his home at Ticinum, in which house he hid some very strong men, fully armed, who were to kill the king while he was banqueting. When this had been reported to Liutprand, he ordered Rothari to be called to his palace and, touching him with his hand, he discovered, as had been told him, a cuirass under his clothing. When Rothari found out that he was detected, he straightway leaped backwards and unsheathed his sword to strike the king, who at once drew forth his own sword from his scabbard. Then one of the royal attendants, seizing Rothari from behind, was wounded by him in the forehead, but others leaped upon Rothari and killed him. Four of his sons, who were not present, were also put to death.

King Liutprand was indeed a man of great boldness. Once when two of his armor-bearers thought to kill him and this had been reported to him, he went alone with them into a very deep wood and, holding against them his drawn sword, he reproached them because they had planned to slay him, and urged them to do it if they could. And straightway they fell at his feet and confessed everything they had plotted. . . .

[1] Paul the Deacon, *Historia gentis Langobardorum*, vi, 38.

CHAPTER II

CHARLEMAGNE [1]

EGINHARD, or Einhard, a Frankish monk, lived many years at the court of Charlemagne as one of the group of scholars whom that ruler gathered about him. Charlemagne made Einhard his secretary and private chaplain. To Einhard historians are indebted for the best contemporary account of the emperor. Though very brief, and not free from inaccuracies, the life is simply written, without extravagance of praise or exaggeration of Charlemagne's achievements. The book also calls for special notice as one of the few works of literary value composed during the early Middle Ages.

7. Charlemagne's Conquests and Alliances [2]

Great and powerful as was the realm of the Franks, which Charlemagne had received from his father Pepin, he nevertheless so splendidly enlarged it by his conquests that he almost doubled it. For previously the eastern Franks had only inhabited that part of Gaul which lies between the Rhine and the Loire, the Atlantic Ocean and the western Mediterranean, and that part of Germany situated between Saxony and the Danube, the Rhine, and the Saale. The Alamanni and Bavarians also belonged to the Frankish confederation. But Charlemagne conquered and made tributary, first, Aquitania and Gascony and the whole range of the Pyrenees, as far as the river Ebro . . . then the whole of Italy, from Aosta to Lower Calabria,

[1] *Eginhard's Life of the Emperor Karl the Great*, translated by William Glaister. London, 1877. George Bell and Sons.

[2] Einhard, *Vita Caroli Magni*, 15–16.

where are the boundaries of the Greeks and Beneventans, an extent of more than a thousand miles in length; then Saxony, which is indeed no small part of Germany and is thought to be twice as wide as the part where the Franks dwell and equal to it in length; then both provinces of Pannonia and Dacia, on one side of the river Danube; also Istria, Liburnia, and Dalmatia, with the exception of the maritime towns, which for friendship's sake, and on account of a treaty, he allowed the eastern emperor to hold; lastly, all the wild and barbarous nations which inhabit Germany between the Rhine and the Vistula, the ocean and the Danube, who speak a very similar language but are widely different in manners and dress. . . .

The renown of his kingdom was also much increased by the friendly alliances he cultivated with different kings and nations. Alphonso II, the Christian king of northwestern Spain, was so bound to him by the ties of friendship that, when he sent him letters or messengers, he used to command that he should be spoken of as Charlemagne's man. The kings of the Scots, too, by his munificence, were so devoted to his will that they ever spoke of him as their lord, and of themselves as his submissive servants. Letters are still extant from them to him, showing what sort of relationship existed between them.

Harun,[1] king of the Persians, who, with the exception of India, ruled over nearly all the East, was held by Charlemagne in such hearty friendship that he valued the Frankish ruler's esteem above that of all other kings and princes of the world. . . . When the officers sent by Charlemagne with offerings to the most sacred sepulcher and place of the resurrection of our Lord and Savior came to Harun and announced the desires of their master, he not only gave them permission to do as they wished, but ordered that revered and sacred spot to be considered as belonging to Charlemagne. When the ambassadors set out on their return, Harun sent with them his own envoys, who conveyed to the king strange and curious gifts, with garments and

[1] Harun-al-Rashid (Aaron the Just) was the third caliph of the Abbasid dynasty. His capital was Bagdad.

spices and other rich products of the East, just as he had given to him, a few years before, the only elephant he then possessed.

The eastern emperors, Nicephorus I, Michael I, and Leo V, of their own accord, also sought his friendship and alliance and sent to him several embassies. Since, by assuming the imperial title, he had laid himself open to the grave suspicion of wishing to deprive them of empire, he made with them the most binding treaty possible, that there might be no occasion of offense between them. But the Romans and Greeks always viewed with distrust the power of the Franks; hence arose the Greek proverb, "Have a Frank for a friend but not for a neighbor."

8. Charlemagne as a Builder [1]

Illustrious as was Charlemagne in enlarging his kingdom and in conquering foreign nations, and though constantly occupied with such affairs, he nevertheless began in several places very many works for the adornment and convenience of his realm. Some of these he was able to finish. Chief among them may be mentioned the church of the Holy Mother of God, built at Aachen,[2] a marvel of workmanship; and the bridge over the Rhine at Mainz,[3] five hundred paces in length, so broad is the river at that place. This bridge, however, was destroyed by fire the year before Charlemagne died. It could not be restored on account of his approaching death, although he intended to replace the wooden structure by a bridge of stone.

He also began some magnificent palaces, one not far from Mainz, near the town of Ingelheim, and another at Nimeguen, on the river Waal. . . . He was especially particular in giving orders to the priests and fathers to see to the restoration of the churches under their care, if in any part of his kingdom he found them fallen into decay.

Charlemagne also constructed a fleet for the war against the

[1] Einhard, *Vita Caroli Magni*, 17.
[2] Or Aix-la-Chapelle.
[3] Or Mayence.

Northmen. For this purpose ships were built on the rivers of Gaul and Germany which flow into the North Sea. As the Northmen were making a practice of ravaging the coasts of Gaul and Germany, he posted towers and outlooks in all the harbors, and at the mouths of those rivers which ships could navigate. By these defenses he prevented any enemy from being able to pass into the interior. He did the same thing in the south, on the coast of the provinces of Narbonne and Septimania, and along all the coast of Italy as far as Rome, for in those parts the Moors had lately taken to piracy. Thus Italy suffered no great damage from the Moors, nor Gaul or Germany from the Northmen, during the reign of Charlemagne, except that Civita Vecchia, a city of Etruria, was betrayed to the Moors, who took it and destroyed it, and in Frisia some islands off the German coast were plundered by the Northmen.

9. Domestic Life of Charlemagne [1]

Such does it appear was the work of Charlemagne in defending, enlarging, and adorning his dominions; and one must be permitted to admire his mental gifts and his great firmness of purpose in all circumstances, whether of prosperity or adversity.

I will now begin to speak of other matters relating to his private and domestic life. On the death of his father he bore all the jealousy and illwill of his brother, in the division of the kingdom,[2] with so much patience and forbearance that he astonished everybody, for he would not allow himself even to be provoked to anger by him.

It was by the desire of his mother that he took for his wife a daughter of Desiderius, king of the Lombards; but at the end of a year he divorced her, for what reason is uncertain. He then married Hildegard, a Swabian lady of noble birth, by whom he had three sons and three daughters. . . . His mother

[1] Einhard, *Vita Caroli Magni*, 18–19.

[2] King Pepin, shortly before his death in 768, divided the Frankish realm between his two sons, Charles and Carloman. The latter died in 771, and Charles then seized his brother's portion of the kingdom.

lived with him to old age, in great honor, being looked up to by her son with the utmost respect, so that no difference ever arose between them, except with regard to the divorce of the daughter of King Desiderius, whom she had persuaded him to marry. She did not die until after the death of Hildegard, having lived to see three grandsons and as many granddaughters in the house of her son. . . . He had one sister, Gisla, who was dedicated to a religious life from her earliest years. Like his mother, she was regarded by Charlemagne with the greatest affection. She died a few years before him, and was buried in the convent to which she had retired.

Charlemagne thought so much about the education of his children that he caused both sons and daughters to be early instructed in those liberal studies which attracted his own attention. As soon as his sons were old enough, he had them ride on horseback, as was the Frankish custom, and practice themselves in arms and hunting. He bade his daughters learn wool-spinning and the use of the distaff and spindle, and employ themselves industriously in every virtuous occupation, that they might not be enervated by idleness.

He was so careful in the bringing up of his sons and daughters that when at home he never dined without them, and they always accompanied him on his journeys, his sons riding by his side and his daughters following close behind, attended by a train of servants appointed for that purpose. His daughters were very fair, and he loved them passionately. Strange to say, he would never consent to give them in marriage, either to any of his own nation or to foreigners; but he kept them all at home and near his person until his death, for he used to say that he could not deprive himself of their society.

10. Charlemagne's Personality and Habits [1]

The figure of Charlemagne was large and robust. He was of commanding stature, though not exceeding good proportions,

[1] Einhard, *Vita Caroli Magni*, 22–25.

for he measured seven times the length of his foot. The top of his head was round, his eyes large and animated, his nose somewhat long, his hair white, and his face bright and pleasant; so that, whether standing or sitting, he appeared dignified and impressive. Although his neck was thick and rather short, and his waist too prominent, still the fair proportions of his limbs concealed these defects. His walk was firm, and the whole carriage of his body was manly. His voice was clear, but not so strong as his frame would have led one to expect. His health was good until the last four years of his life, when he was attacked with frequent fevers, and latterly walked lame on one foot. Even in illness he leaned more on his own judgment than on the advice of physicians, whom he greatly disliked, because they used to recommend him to leave off roast meat, to which he was accustomed, and eat boiled meat instead.

He took regular exercise in riding and hunting. This was a national habit, since scarcely any people can be found to equal the Franks in these pursuits. He also took delight in the vapor of hot springs and constantly practiced swimming, in which he was very skillful, no one being able to outstrip him. It was on account of the warm baths that he built the palace at Aachen, living there constantly during the last years of his life and until his death. He not only invited his sons to bathe with him, but also his chief men and friends, and occasionally even a crowd of his attendants and guards, so that at times one hundred men or more would be bathing together.

He wore the dress of his native country, that is, the Frankish; on his body a linen shirt and linen drawers; then a tunic with a silver border, and stockings. He bound his legs with garters and wore shoes on his feet. In the winter he protected his shoulders and chest with a vest made of the skins of otters and ermine. He wore a blue cloak, and was always girt with his sword, the hilt and belt being of gold and silver. Sometimes he wore a jeweled sword, but only on great festivals or when receiving foreign ambassadors. He thoroughly disliked the dress of foreigners, however fine, and never put it

on except at Rome, once on the request of Pope Hadrian I, and again a second time, to please his successor, Pope Leo III. He then wore a long tunic, chlamys, and shoes made after the Roman fashion. On festivals he used to walk in processions clad in a garment woven with gold, with shoes studded with jewels, and a cloak fastened with a golden clasp, and wearing a crown of gold set with precious stones. At other times his dress differed little from that of a private person.

In his eating and drinking he was temperate; more particularly so in his drinking, since he had the greatest abhorrence of drunkenness in anybody, but more especially in himself and his companions. He was unable to abstain from food for any length of time, and often complained that fasting was injurious to him. He very rarely feasted, only on great occasions, when there were very large gatherings. The daily service of his table was furnished with only four dishes, in addition to the roast meat, which the hunters used to bring in on spits, and of which he partook more freely than of any other food.

While he was dining he listened to music or reading. History and the deeds of men of old used to be read. He derived much pleasure from the works of St. Augustine,[1] especially from his book called the *City of God*. He was very temperate in the use of wine and other drinks, rarely taking at meals more than two or three draughts. . . . He slept at night so lightly that he would break his rest four or five times, not merely awakening, but even getting up.

While he was dressing and binding on his sandals, he would receive his friends. If the mayor of the palace announced that there was any matter which could only be settled by his decree, the suitors were immediately ordered into his presence and, as if sitting in court, he heard the case and gave judgment. This was not the only business which used to be arranged at such a time, for orders were then given for whatever had to be done on that day by any officer or servant.

[1] St. Augustine (354–430), bishop of Hippo in North Africa, was one of the great "fathers" of the Christian Church.

He was ready and fluent in speaking, and able to express himself with great clearness. He did not confine himself to his native tongue, but took pains to learn foreign languages, acquiring such knowledge of Latin that he used to repeat his prayers in that language as well as in his own. Greek he could better understand than speak. In conversation he was so voluble that he almost gave one the impression of a chatterer. He was an ardent admirer of the liberal arts, and greatly revered their professors, whom he promoted to high honors. In order to learn grammar, he attended the lectures of the aged Peter of Pisa, a deacon; and for other instruction he chose as his preceptor Alcuin, also a deacon. Alcuin, a Saxon by race, was the most learned man of the day. With him Charlemagne spent much time in learning rhetoric and logic, and more especially astronomy. He learned the art of computation, and with deep thought and skill very carefully calculated the courses of the planets. Charlemagne also tried to write, and used to keep his tablets and writing-book under the pillow of his couch, that when he had leisure he might practice his hand in forming letters; but he made little progress in a task too long deferred and begun too late in life.

11. Charlemagne's Regard for the Church [1]

The Christian religion, in which he had been brought up from infancy, was held by Charlemagne as most sacred, and he worshiped in it with the greatest piety. For this reason he built at Aachen a most beautiful church, which he enriched with gold, silver, and candlesticks, and also with lattices and doors of solid brass. When columns and marbles for the building could not be obtained elsewhere, he had them brought from Rome and Ravenna.

As long as his health permitted, he was most regular in attending divine service at matins and evensong, and also during the night and at the time of the mass; and he took special

[1] Einhard, *Vita Caroli Magni*, 26–28.

care that all church services should be performed in the most fitting manner possible, frequently cautioning the sacristans not to allow anything improper or unseemly to be brought into, or left in, the building.

He provided such an abundance of sacred vessels of gold and silver, and so large a supply of priestly vestments, that when service was celebrated it was not necessary even for the doorkeepers, who are the lowest order of ecclesiastics, to perform their duties in private dress. He carefully revised the order of reading and singing, being well skilled in both, though he did not read in public or sing, except in a low voice and only in the chorus.

He was most devoted in providing for the poor and in charitable gifts. In this matter he took thought not only for those of his own country and kingdom, but also for those whom he heard were living in poverty beyond the seas, in Africa, Egypt, and Syria, at Carthage, Alexandria, and Jerusalem. To such persons he used to send money in compassion for their wants. It was on this account, especially, that he courted the friendship of foreign princes, that he might be able to become a solace and comfort to those Christians who were living under their rule.

He held the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, at Rome, in far higher regard than any other place of sanctity and veneration, and he enriched its treasury with a great quantity of gold, silver, and precious stones.

To the pope he made many rich presents; and nothing lay nearer his heart during his whole reign than that the city of Rome should attain to its ancient importance by his zeal and patronage, and that the church of St. Peter should not only be in safe keeping and protection, but should also by his wealth be ennobled and enriched beyond all other churches. Although he thought so much of this, it was only four times, during the forty-seven years of his reign, that he had leisure to go to Rome for prayer and supplication.

The last visit he paid to Rome was not only for the above

reasons, but also because the Romans had driven Pope Leo III to ask his assistance — for they had grievously ill-treated him; indeed, his eyes had been plucked out and his tongue cut off.[1]

Charlemagne, therefore, went to Rome, and stayed in the city the whole winter in order to reform and quiet the Church, which was in a most disturbed state. It was at this time that he received the title of Emperor and Augustus, to which at first he was so averse that he remarked that, had he known the intention of the pope, he would not have entered St. Peter's on that day, great festival though it was.

He bore very quietly the displeasure of the Roman emperors at Constantinople, who were exceedingly indignant at his assumption of the imperial title, and overcame their sullenness by his great magnanimity, sending them frequent embassies and styling them his brothers in his letter to them.

12. Last Days of Charlemagne [2]

After he had taken the imperial title, Charlemagne turned his attention to the laws of his people, which seemed greatly to need improvement, since the Franks have two laws,[3] differing much in many places. Charlemagne's intention was to add what was wanting in each, to reconcile the differences, and to correct what was vicious or wrongly expressed. In the end, however, he did nothing more than add a few capitularies, and those unfinished.

He caused the unwritten laws of all the nations under his rule to be tabulated and reduced to writing. He wrote out and committed to memory the rude and very ancient songs which told of the exploits and wars of the kings of old. He began a grammar of the language of his country. He also gave names in the national tongue to the months of the year,

[1] Pope Leo's injuries do not seem to have been of so deep or permanent a character as the text describes.

[2] Einhard, *Vita Caroli Magni*, 29–32.

[3] That is, the laws of the Salian Franks and the laws of the Ripuarian Franks.

for up to this time the Franks had distinguished them partly by Latin and partly by barbarian names. He likewise gave the proper names to the twelve winds, for previously names were known for hardly four. . . .

Toward the close of his life, when bowed down by disease and old age, he summoned to him his son Louis, the king of Aquitania, who alone survived of the sons of Hildegard. In a solemn assembly of the chief men of the whole realm of the Franks, and with their unanimous consent, he appointed Louis his partner in the whole kingdom and heir of the imperial title. He then placed the royal crown on his head and bade him be saluted as Emperor and Augustus. . . .

Charlemagne then sent his son into Aquitania and, although weakened by age, went on his usual hunting expedition in the neighborhood of the palace at Aachen. In this pursuit he passed the remainder of the autumn and returned to Aachen early in November. During the winter, in the month of January, he was confined to his bed by a sharp attack of fever. He at once prescribed for himself abstinence from food, which was his usual treatment of fever, thinking that by this means he could throw off the disease, or at least control it; but pleurisy supervened. He still continued to starve himself, only keeping himself up by occasionally taking liquids; and on the seventh day after he had been confined to his bed he received the Holy Communion and died soon after, at nine o'clock, on the 28th of January, in the seventy-third year of his age and forty-seventh year of his reign.

His body was reverently washed and tended, and then carried into the church and buried, to the great grief of all his people. There was some doubt at first where was the most proper place for his burial, for during his life he had given no orders on this matter. At last it was agreed by all that he could be buried in no more fitting place than in the church which he had built at his own cost at Aachen, out of love to God and our Lord Christ, and to the honor of the ever blessed Virgin. So he was buried there on the same day that he died.

Above his tomb was erected a gilded monument, with his effigy and title upon it.[1] . . .

Warnings of the approaching death of Charlemagne were very numerous, and were noticed by the emperor himself, as well as by others. For three years before his death there were frequent eclipses of the sun and moon, and black spots were noticed on the sun during seven successive days. The portico, which had been built with great labor between the church and palace, suddenly fell down to the very foundation, on the day of the Ascension of our Lord. The wooden bridge over the Rhine at Mainz, on which an immense amount of toil and trouble had been expended during ten years, so that it seemed a thoroughly durable and permanent structure, was accidentally burnt down in three hours. The destruction was so complete that there did not remain above water mark sufficient wood for the making of a lance shaft. Again, while Charlemagne was in Saxony, one day when the march had already begun, Charlemagne saw fall suddenly from heaven a blazing torch, which passed through the clear sky from right to left. While all were wondering what this might portend, the horse on which the emperor was riding fell down suddenly on its head, and he was thrown to the ground with such violence that the clasp of his cloak was broken and his sword belt burst. He was ungirt by his attendants, who hastened to his assistance, and with some difficulty was lifted up again. A javelin, which he happened to be holding at the time, was thrown from his grasp a distance of more than twenty feet.

There occurred, too, frequent shakings of the palace at Aachen, and constant crackings of the ceilings of the houses in which he dwelt. The church in which he was afterwards buried was struck by lightning, and the golden apple which adorned the summit of the roof was displaced and thrown

[1] In the year 1000 Charlemagne's tomb was opened by the emperor Otto III. Legend declares that Otto found the body upright upon a throne, with a golden crown on the head and a golden scepter still clasped in the lifeless hands. About two hundred years later Charlemagne's remains were transferred to a splendid shrine, where they may still be seen.

upon the adjoining house of the priest. There was in the same church, on the ring of the cornice, which ran around the interior of the building between the upper and lower arches, an inscription in red letters, which related who was the founder of the church; the last line ended with the words "Carolus Princeps." It was noticed by some people that in the year in which he died, and a few months before his death, the letters which formed the word "Princeps" were so faded as scarcely to appear at all. The emperor either pretended not to notice all these warnings from on high, or he despised them as if they in no way related to himself.

CHAPTER III

THE BENEDICTINE RULE[1]

With the exception of the Bible, there is probably no book which has more directly influenced the course of European history than the *Rule of St. Benedict.* According to the provisions of that Rule were trained those monks, who, like Augustine in England and Boniface in Germany, brought the Christian religion and the blessings of civilization to the heathen peoples of western Europe. No one can read the Rule through without being impressed with the practical wisdom of its author. He sought by his regulations to preserve the spiritual benefits of the monastic life, without allowing it to run to extremes of asceticism. Hence his monks were to subject themselves to strict discipline under the supervision of an abbot; they were to have proper clothing, sufficient food, and ample sleep; and they were to engage, not only in religious exercises, but also in useful manual labor. All this presented a marked contrast to the kind of monastic observance which prevailed in the East and, before St. Benedict, in Italy and Gaul. The Benedictine Rule, because it met so well the requirements of the monastic life, came gradually to be followed by all the monasteries of western Christendom.

[1] *The Rule of St. Benedict,* translated by F. A. Gasquet. London, 1909. Chatto and Windus.

13. The Abbot and His Duties [1]

An abbot to be fit to rule a monastery should ever remember what he is called, and in his acts illustrate his high position. For in a monastery he is considered to take the place of Christ, since he is called by His name. As the apostle says, "Ye have received the spirit of the adoption of sons, whereby we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" [2] Therefore the abbot should neither teach, ordain, nor require anything against the command of our Lord (God forbid!), but in the minds of his disciples let his orders and teaching be mingled with the leaven of divine justice. . . .

When anyone shall receive the name of abbot, he ought to rule his disciples with a twofold teaching: that is, he should first show them in acts rather than words all that is good and holy. To such as are of understanding, indeed, he may expound the Lord's behests by words; but to the hard-hearted and to the simple-minded he must manifest the divine precepts in his life. . . .

Let the abbot make no distinction of persons in the monastery. Let not one be loved more than another, except those who are found to excel in obedience or good works. Let not the free-born be put before the serf-born in religion, unless there is some other reasonable cause for it. . . . For one thing only are we preferred by Him, if we are found better than others in good works and more humble. Let the abbot, therefore, have equal love for all, and let all, according to their deserts, be under the same discipline.

The abbot in his teaching should always observe that apostolic rule which says, "Reprove, entreat, rebuke." [3] That is to say, as occasions require, he ought to mingle encouragement with reproofs. Let him manifest the sternness of a master and the loving affection of a father. He must reprove the undisciplined and restless severely, but he should exhort such as are obedient, quiet, and patient, for their better profit.

[1] *S. Benedicti regula*, 2–3.
[2] *Romans*, viii, 15.
[3] 2 *Timothy*, iv, 2.

We charge him, however, to reprove and punish the stubborn and negligent. Let him not shut his eyes to the sins of offenders; but, as soon as these begin to show themselves and to grow, he must use every means to root them up utterly. . . . To the more virtuous and apprehensive, indeed, he may for the first or second time use words of warning; but in dealing with the stubborn, the hard-hearted, the proud, and the disobedient, even at the very beginning of their sin, let him chastise them with stripes and with bodily punishment, knowing that it is written, "The fool is not corrected with words." [1] And again, "Strike thy son with a rod and thou shalt deliver his soul from death." [2] . . .

Whenever any weighty matters have to be transacted in the monastery, let the abbot call together all the community and himself propose the matter for discussion. After hearing the advice of the brethren, let him consider it in his own mind and then do what he shall judge most expedient. We ordain that all must be called to council, because the Lord often reveals to a younger member what is best. And let the brethren give their advice with all humble subjection, and presume not stiffly to defend their own opinion. Let them rather leave the matter to the abbot's discretion, so that all submit to what he shall deem best. As it is fitting for disciples to obey their master, so it behooves the master to dispose of all things with forethought and justice. . . .

14. The Monastic Vows [3]

The first degree of humility is prompt obedience. This is required of all who, whether by reason of the holy servitude to which they are pledged, or through fear of hell, or to attain to the glory of eternal life, hold nothing more dear than Christ. Such disciples delay not in doing what is ordered by their superior, just as if the command had come from God. . . .

Let us do as the prophet says, "I have said, I will keep my ways, that I offend not with my tongue. I have been

[1] *Proverbs*, xxiii, 9.
[2] *Ibid.*, xxiii, 13.
[3] *S. Benedicti regula*, 5–7.

watchful over my mouth; I held my peace and humbled myself and was silent from speaking even good things."[1] Here the prophet shows that, for the sake of silence, we are at times to abstain even from good talk. If this is so, how much more needful is it that we refrain from evil words, on account of the penalty of the sin! Because of the importance of silence, therefore, let leave to speak be seldom given, even to perfect disciples, although their talk is of good and holy matters and tending to edification. . . .

The first step of humility is reached when a man, with the fear of God always before his eyes . . . is ever mindful of all God's commandments. He remembers, moreover, that those who condemn God fall into hell for their sins, and that life eternal awaits those who fear Him. . . .

The second step of humility is reached when a man takes no heed to satisfy his own desires, but copies in his life what our Lord said, "I came not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."[2] Scripture likewise proclaims that self-will engenders punishment, and necessity purchases a crown.

The third step of humility is reached when a man, for the love of God, submits himself with all obedience to a superior, imitating our Lord, of whom the apostle says, "He was made obedient even unto death."[3]

The fourth step of humility is reached when anyone in the exercise of his obedience patiently and with a quiet mind bears all that is inflicted on him, even things contrary to nature and at times unjust, and in suffering all these he neither wearies nor abandons the work, since the Scripture says, "He only that perseveres to the end shall be saved";[4] also, "Let thy heart be comforted and expect the Lord."[5] . . .

The fifth step of humility is reached when a monk manifests to his abbot, by humble confession, all the evil thoughts of his heart and his secret faults. The Scripture urges us to do

[1] *Psalms*, xxxix, 1–2.
[2] *John*, vi, 38.
[3] *Philippians*, ii, 8.
[4] *Matthew*, xxiv, 13.
[5] *Psalms*, xxvii, 14.

this where it says, "Commit thy way to the Lord and hope in Him."[1] It also says, "Confess to the Lord, because He is good, because His mercy endures forever."[2] . . .

The sixth step of humility is reached when a monk is content with all that is mean and vile; and in regard to everything required of him accounts himself a poor and worthless workman, saying with the prophet, "I have been brought to nothing, and knew it not. I have become as a beast before Thee, and I am always with Thee."[3]

The seventh step of humility is reached when a man not only confesses with his tongue that he is most lowly and inferior to others, but in his inmost heart believes so. . . .

The eighth step of humility is reached when a monk does nothing but what the common rule of the monastery, or the example of his seniors, enforces.

The ninth step of humility is reached when a monk restrains his tongue from talking, and, practicing silence, speaks not till a question is asked him, since Scripture says, "In many words thou shalt not avoid sin,"[4] and "A talkative man shall not be directed upon the earth."[5]

The tenth step of humility is attained when one is not easily and quickly moved to laughter, for it is written, "The fool lifts his voice in laughter."[6]

The eleventh step of humility is reached when a monk, in speaking, does so quietly and without laughter, humbly, gravely, in a few words, and not with a loud voice, for it is written, "A wise man is known by a few words."[7]

The twelfth step of humility is reached when a monk not only has humility in his heart, but also shows it to all who behold him. Thus, whether he is in the oratory at prayer, in the monastery, in the garden, on a journey, in the fields, or wheresoever he is, sitting, standing or walking, always let him, with head bent and eyes fixed on the ground, bethink himself

[1] *Psalms*, xxxvii, 5. [2] *Ibid.*, cvi, 1. [3] *Ibid.*, lxxiii, 22–23.
[4] *Proverbs*, x, 19. [5] *Psalms*, cxl, 11. [6] *Ecclesiastes*, x, 14.
[7] *Ibid.*, xxi, 23.

of his sins and imagine that he is arraigned before the dread judgment of God. . . .

When all these steps of humility have been mounted, the monk will presently attain to that love of God which is perfect and casteth out fear. By means of this love everything which before he had observed not without fear, he shall now begin to do by habit, without any trouble and, as it were, naturally. He acts now, not through fear of hell, but for the love of Christ, out of a good habit and a delight in virtue. . . .

15. Conduct of the Monastery [1]

All shall sleep in separate beds, and each shall receive, according to the appointment of the abbot, bedclothes fitted to the condition of his life. If it is possible, let them all sleep in a common dormitory, but if their great number will not allow this, they may sleep in tens or twenties, with seniors to have charge of them. Let a candle be constantly burning in the room until morning, and let the monks sleep clothed and girt with girdles or cords; but they are not to have knives by their sides in their beds, lest perchance they injure themselves while sleeping. In this way the monks shall always be ready to rise quickly when the signal is given and hasten each one to come before his brother to the night office, and yet with all gravity and modesty.

The younger brethren are not to have their beds next to each other, but among those of the elders. When they rise for the night office, let them gently encourage one another, because of the excuses made by those who are drowsy.[2]

If any brother is found to be stubborn, disobedient, proud, murmuring, or in any way acting contrary to the Holy Rule, or condemning the orders of his seniors, let him, according to the precept of our Lord, be secretly admonished by those seniors, once or twice. If he will not amend, let him be publicly

[1] *S. Benedicti regula*, 22–23, 29, 32–33, 38–39, 53–55.

[2] The time of rising for divine service at the night office varied from 1.30 A.M. to 3.00 A.M., according to the season of the year.

reproved before all. But if even then he does not correct his faults, let him, if he understands the nature of the punishment, be subject to excommunication. But if he remains obstinate, he is to undergo corporal punishment.

If the brother, who through his own bad conduct leaves the monastery or is expelled from it, shall desire to return, he must first promise full amendment of the fault for which he went away. He may then be received back to the lowest place, that by this his humility may be tried. If he shall again leave, he may be received back till the third time, but he must know that after this all possibility of returning will be denied to him.

Let the abbot appoint brethren, of whose life and moral conduct he is sure, to keep the iron tools, the clothes, and other property of the monastery. . . . The abbot shall hold a list of these things in order that, as the brethren succeed each other in their appointed work, he may know what he gives and what he receives back. If anyone shall treat the property of the monastery in a slovenly or careless way, let him be corrected; if he does not amend, let him be subjected to regular discipline.

Above all others, let this vice be extirpated in the monastery. No one, without leave of the abbot, shall presume to give, or receive, or keep as his own anything whatever: neither book, nor tablets, nor pen: nothing at all. For monks are men who can claim no dominion even over their own bodies or wills. All that is necessary, however, they may hope from the abbot of the monastery; but they must keep nothing which the abbot has not given or allowed. All things are to be common to all. . . .

There ought always to be reading while the brethren eat at table. Yet no one shall presume to read there from any book taken up at haphazard; but whoever is appointed to read for the whole week is to enter on his office on Sunday. . . . The greatest silence shall be kept, so that no whispering, nor noise, save the voice of the reader, be heard there. . . .

We believe that it is enough to satisfy just requirements if, in the daily meals, at both the sixth and ninth hours, there are at all seasons of the year two cooked dishes, so that he who cannot eat of the one may make his meal of the other. Hence two dishes of cooked food must suffice for all the brethren, and if there be any fruit or fresh vegetables these may be added to the meal as a third dish. Let a pound's weight of bread suffice for each day, that is, for both dinner and supper. . . .

If, however, the community has been occupied in any great labor, the abbot may increase the allowance, as long as every care is taken to guard against excess and no monks are incapacitated by overeating. For nothing is more contrary to the Christian spirit than gluttony. . . .

Let all guests who come be received as Christ would be, because He will say, "I was a stranger, and ye took Me in."[1] And let due honor be shown to all, especially to those who are of the household of the Faith, and to pilgrims. As soon, therefore, as a guest is announced, let him be met by the prior or the brethren, with all marks of charity. And let them first pray together, so that they may associate in peace. . . .

It is by no means lawful, without the abbot's permission, for any monk to receive or give letters, presents, and gifts of any kind to anyone, not even to one of the brethren. If anything is sent to a monk from his parents, he shall not venture to receive it unless the abbot is first informed. . . .

A mattress, blanket, coverlet, and pillow are to suffice for bedding. The beds shall be frequently searched by the abbot to guard against the vice of hoarding. And if anyone is found in possession of something not allowed by the abbot, let him be subjected to the severest punishment. To uproot this vice of appropriation, let all that is necessary be furnished by the abbot, that is, cowl, tunic, shoes, stockings, girdle, knife, pen, needle, handkerchief, and tablets. By this means every pretext of necessity will be taken away. . . .

[1] *Matthew*, xxv, 35.

16. Occupations of the Monks [1]

Idleness is an enemy of the soul. Because this is so, the brethren ought to be occupied at specified times in manual labor, and at other fixed hours in holy reading. We think, therefore, that both these may be arranged as follows: from Easter to the first of October,[2] on coming out from prime,[3] let the brethren labor till about the fourth hour.[4] From the fourth till about the sixth hour,[5] let them employ themselves in reading. On rising from table after the sixth hour, let them rest on their beds in strict silence; but if a monk shall wish to read, let him do so in such a way as not to disturb anyone else.

Let none [6] be said somewhat before the time, about the middle of the eighth hour, and after this all shall work at what they have to do till evening. If, however, the nature of the place or poverty requires them to labor at gathering in the harvest, let them not grieve at that, for then are they truly monks when they live by the labor of their hands, as our Fathers and the Apostles did. Let everything, however, be done with moderation, for the sake of the faint-hearted. . . .

On Sunday, also, all except those who are assigned to various offices shall have time for reading. If, however, anyone is so negligent and slothful as to be unwilling or unable to read or meditate, he must have some work given him, so as not to be idle. For weak brethren, or those of delicate constitutions, some work or craft shall be found to keep them from idleness, and yet not such as to crush them by the heavy labor or to drive them away. The weakness of such brethren must be taken into consideration by the abbot.

Let such craftsmen as are in the monastery ply their trade

[1] *S. Benedicti regula*, 48, 57.

[2] A somewhat different program of daily occupations was to be followed by the monks from the first of October to Lent and during the Lenten season.

[3] A church service at the first canonical hour.

[4] The fourth hour would be in summer about 9 A.M.

[5] The sixth hour would be about midday.

[6] A church service in the middle of the afternoon.

in all lowliness of mind, if the abbot allows it. But if anyone is puffed up by his skill in his craft, and thinks that the monastery is indebted to him for it, he shall be shifted from his handicraft, and shall not attempt it again till such time as, having learnt a low opinion of himself, the abbot shall bid him resume. If any of the products of their labors are sold, let those who have the handling of the affair see to it that they do not dare to practice any fraud therein. . . .

CHAPTER IV

THE REËSTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY IN BRITAIN[1]

BÆDA, commonly called "the Venerable Bede" (672–735), was a Benedictine monk of the monastery of Jarrow on the Tyne. In a short account of himself he says, "I have spent the whole of my life within that monastery, giving all my energy to meditation on the Scriptures; and, amid the observance of the monastic rule and the daily ministry of singing in the church, it has ever been my delight to learn or teach or write." Bede's tranquil career and devotion to study enabled him to produce many books, of which the best known is his *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation.* It is the first truly historical work composed by an Englishman. Although primarily a church history, the book also touches on secular affairs and forms, indeed, one of the chief sources of our knowledge of the seventh and early eighth centuries.

17. Pope Gregory's Interest in the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxons[2]

In the year of our Lord 582, Maurice,[3] the fifty-fourth emperor from Augustus, ascended the throne and reigned twenty-one years. In the tenth year of his reign, Gregory[4] was promoted to the apostolical see of Rome, and presided over it thirteen years, six months, and ten days. Gregory, being

[1] *The Complete Works of the Venerable Bede,* translated by J. A. Giles. 12 vols. in 6. London, 1843–1844. Whittaker and Company.

[2] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum,* i, 23.

[3] Maurice (Mauricius), Roman emperor in the East.

[4] Gregory I, the Great.

moved by divine inspiration . . . sent the servant of God, Augustine, and with him several other monks, who feared the Lord, to preach the word of God to the English nation. But after they had undertaken the work, they were seized with sudden fear and began to think of returning home, rather than proceed to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving nation, to whose very language they were strangers. . . . In short, they sent back Augustine, who was to be consecrated bishop in case they were received by the English, that he might persuade the holy Gregory to relieve them from undertaking so dangerous, toilsome, and uncertain a journey. The pope, in reply, sent them a hortatory epistle, persuading them to proceed in their enterprise, and to rely on the assistance of the Almighty. The letter ran as follows:

"Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. Forasmuch as it would have been better not to have begun a good work, than to think of desisting from that which has been begun, it behooves you, my beloved sons, to fulfill the good work which you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey nor the tongues of evil-speaking men deter you; but with all possible earnestness and zeal perform that which, by God's direction, you have undertaken; being assured that much labor is followed by an eternal reward. When Augustine, your chief, returns, whom we also constitute your abbot, humbly obey him in all things; knowing that whatsoever you shall do by his direction will be available to your souls. Almighty God protect you with his grace and grant that I may, in the heavenly country, see the fruits of your mission. Though I cannot labor with you, I shall partake in the joy of the reward, because I am willing to labor. God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons."

18. Landing of Augustine in Britain [1]

Augustine, thus strengthened by the confirmation of the blessed Gregory, returned to the work of the word of God,

[1] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, i, 25–26.

with the servants of Christ, and arrived in Britain. The powerful Ethelbert was at that time king of Kent; he had extended his dominions as far as the river Humber, by which the South Saxons are divided from those of the North. On the east of Kent is the large Isle of Thanet. . . . In this island landed the servant of our Lord, Augustine, and his companions, numbering nearly forty men. By order of the blessed Gregory, they had taken interpreters of the nation of the Franks. They now sent word to Ethelbert that they were come from Rome, and brought a joyful message, which most undoubtedly assured to all that took advantage of it everlasting joys in heaven. The Kentish king, having heard this message, ordered them to stay in the island where they had landed. He gave further orders that they should be furnished with all necessities, till he should consider what to do with them. For he had before heard of the Christian religion, having a Christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, called Bertha, whom he had received from her parents upon condition that she should be permitted to practice her religion with Bishop Luidhard, who was sent with her to preserve her faith.

Some days later, the king came into the island and, sitting in the open air, ordered Augustine and his companions to be brought into his presence. He had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, according to an ancient superstition, if they practiced any magical arts, they might impose upon him and so get the better of him. But they came furnished with divine, not with magic virtue, bearing a silver cross for their banner, and the image of our Lord and Savior painted on a board. After singing the litany, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom they had come.

When Augustine had sat down, according to the king's commands, and had preached to him and his attendants there the word of life, the king answered, "Your words and promises are very fair, but as they are new to us and of uncertain meaning, I cannot approve of them so far as to forsake that which

I have so long followed with the whole English nation. But because you have come from afar into my kingdom and, as I believe, are desirous of imparting to us those things which you consider to be true and most beneficial, we will not molest you, but will give you favorable entertainment. We will also take care to supply you with your necessary sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion." Accordingly, he permitted them to reside in the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions, and, according to his promise, besides allowing them sustenance, did not refuse them liberty to preach. It is reported that, as they drew near to the city with the holy cross and the image of our sovereign Lord and King, Jesus Christ, they sang this litany: "We beseech, Thee, O Lord, in all Thy mercy, that Thy anger and wrath be turned away from this city and from the holy house, because we have sinned. Hallelujah."

As soon as they entered the dwelling place assigned them, they began to imitate the course of life practiced in the primitive church; applying themselves to frequent prayer, watching, and fasting; preaching the word of life to as many as they could; despising all worldly things, as not belonging to them; receiving only their necessary food from those they taught; living themselves in all respects conformably to what they prescribed to others; and being always disposed to suffer any adversity, and even to die for that truth which they preached. In short, several believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their innocent life and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was on the east side of the city a church dedicated to the honor of St. Martin, built while the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen, who, as has been said before, was a Christian, used to pray. In this they first began to meet, to sing, to pray, to say mass, to preach, and to baptize, till the king, being converted to the faith, allowed them to preach openly and build or repair churches in all places. . . .

When the king was baptized, great numbers began daily to flock together to hear the word and, forsaking their heathen rites, to unite with the church of Christ. Their conversion the king so far encouraged that he compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom. For he had learned from his instructors and leaders to salvation that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion. It was not long before he gave his teachers a settled residence in his metropolis of Canterbury, with such possessions of different kinds as were necessary for their subsistence.

19. Pope Gregory's Letter on Converting the Heathen [1]

Pope Gregory, hearing from Bishop Augustine that "he had a great harvest and but few laborers," sent over to Britain several helpers, among them Abbot Mellitus. To Mellitus the pope addressed the following letter, in which he set forth the cautious methods to be adopted by the Roman monks in their work of converting the heathen.

"We have been much concerned . . . because we have received no account of the success of your journey. When, therefore, Almighty God shall bring you to the most reverend Bishop Augustine, our brother, tell him what, upon mature deliberation on the affair of the English, I have determined upon. I think that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let holy water be made and sprinkled in the said temples, and let altars be erected and relics placed. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils [2] to the service of the true God; that the people, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and, knowing and adoring the true God, may the more familiarly resort to the places to which they have been accustomed.

And because the natives have been used to slaughter many

[1] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, i, 30.

[2] Meaning the heathen deities.

oxen in the sacrifices to devils, some festival must be exchanged for them on this account. On the day of the dedication or the birthdays of the holy martyrs, whose relics are there deposited, they may build themselves huts, of the boughs of trees, about those churches which have been turned to that use from temples, and celebrate the festival with religious feasting, and no more offer beasts to the devils, but kill cattle to the praise of God in their eating. Let them return thanks to the Giver of all things for their sustenance, to the end that, while some gratifications are outwardly permitted them, they may the more easily consent to the inward consolations of the grace of God. There is no doubt that it is impossible to efface everything at once from their obdurate minds; because he who endeavors to ascend to the highest place rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps. . . . "

20. Paulinus and the Conversion of Northumbria [1]

Augustine died in 604 and his protector, Ethelbert, in 616. The death of Ethelbert marked the end of Kentish supremacy in Britain. Northumbria, the country to the north of the Humber River, soon became the ruling power in the island. Edwin, the Northumbrian king (617–633), extended his rule as far as the Firth of Forth and established there a frontier fortress, from which Edinburgh (the city of Edwin) takes its name. He allied Northumbria with Kent by marrying a daughter of Ethelbert. The Kentish princess had a chaplain, Paulinus, who urged the Northumbrian king to accept Christianity.

Edwin answered that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which Paulinus taught; but that he would confer about it with his principal friends and councilors, to the end that, if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be cleansed in Christ, the Fountain of Life. The king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of the new doctrine and the new worship that was preached. To this question the chief of his own priests, Coifi, immediately

[1] Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, ii, 13.

answered, "O king, consider what this is which is preached to us; for I declare to you that the religion which we have hitherto professed has, as far as I can learn, no virtue in it. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favors from you, and are more preferred than I, and are more prosperous in all their undertakings. Now, if the gods were good for anything, they would rather forward me, who have been most careful to serve them. If upon examination you find these new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, we ought to receive them immediately without any delay."

Another of the king's chief men, approving of his words and exhortations, spoke to this effect, "The present life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your commanders and ministers, and a good fire in the midst, while the storms of rain and snow prevail abroad. The sparrow, I say, flying in at one door and immediately out at another, while he is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but, after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, into the dark winter from which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space, but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other elders and king's councilors, by divine inspiration, spoke to the same effect.

Coifi now added that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God whom he preached. When Paulinus, by the king's command, had spoken, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out, "I have long since been aware that there was nothing in that which we worshiped; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I freely confess that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts

of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason I advise, O king, that we instantly abjure and set fire to those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them." In short, the king publicly gave his license to Paulinus to preach the Gospel and, renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ. When the king inquired of the high priest who should first profane the altars and temples of their idols, with the inclosures that were about them, he answered, "I; for who can more properly than myself destroy those things which I worshiped through ignorance. This will be an example to all others, through the wisdom which has been given me by the true God."

CHAPTER V

ST. BONIFACE, THE APOSTLE TO THE GERMANS[1]

WYNFRITH, afterwards known as St. Boniface, was born about 680 in Devonshire, England. While still a young man, he became a Benedictine monk and taught grammar and theology in the monastery schools. A distinguished career in the English Church was opening to him, when the call came to leave friends and fatherland for the perilous work of a foreign missionary. St. Boniface visited Rome and received from Pope Gregory II a commission to evangelize Germany east of the Rhine. Supported by the pope and under the protection of the Frankish ruler, Charles Martel, St. Boniface began his self-appointed task. In Frisia, Hesse, Thuringia, and Bavaria he led a systematic crusade, baptizing the heathen, overturning idols, and founding monasteries. Many helpers, both monks and nuns, came to him from England to transplant in the German wilderness English piety and culture. St. Boniface has been called the proconsul of the Papacy. First as bishop, then as archbishop, he was able to organize in Germany a strong Church, which looked to Rome for direction and control. It was from this Church of Germany that the remaining Teutonic peoples, including the Saxons, Danes, and Northmen, and the Slavic peoples beyond the Elbe, received Roman Christianity.

[1] *The English Correspondence of St. Boniface*, translated by Edward Kylie. London, 1911. Chatto and Windus.

21. Bishop Daniel's Letter of Introduction [1]

In 718 St. Boniface set out from England to visit Italy and see the pope. His friend, Bishop Daniel of Winchester, provided him with a general letter of introduction.

To the pious and clement kings and to all princes, to the reverend and beloved bishops, to the holy abbots, the priests, and the spiritual children of Christ, Daniel, servant of the servants of God.

The commands of God must be observed by all the faithful with sincere devotion, and the Holy Scriptures show how great is the reward of hospitality and how acceptable it is to God to discharge kind offices to travelers. The holy Abraham, because of bountiful hospitality, deserved to receive the blessed angels and to enjoy converse with them. Even so Lot, through the same discharge of pious offices, was snatched from the flames of Sodom; he was obedient to the commands of Heaven, and the grace of hospitality saved him from doom in the flames. So it will avail to your eternal salvation if you show to the holy priest and servant of the Omnipotent God, Wynfrith, who bears this letter, the love which God himself prizes and enjoins. Receiving the servants of God, you receive Him, for He has promised, "He that receiveth you receiveth Me."[2] Doing this with heartfelt devotion you fulfill the bidding of God, and trusting to the divine promise you will have eternal reward with Him.

22. A Letter from the Abbess Bugga [3]

St. Boniface's interview with the pope proved to be completely successful, as we learn from a letter to him written by his good friend Bugga.

Be it known to thee, my gracious friend, that I give thanks to Almighty God without ceasing, because, as I learned from thy letter, He has poured upon thee His manifold mercies

[1] Boniface, *Epistolæ*, No. 3.
[2] *Matthew*, x, 40.
[3] Boniface, *Epistolæ*, No. 4.

and jealously guarded thee on thy way through unknown countries. First he inclined the pontiff,[1] who holds the chair of Peter, to smile on thy heart's wish. Afterwards he laid low before thee, Rathbod,[2] that enemy of the Catholic Church; and then he revealed to thee in a dream that thou wert to reap the harvest of God and to gather the sheaves of holy souls into the granary of the heavenly kingdom. Wherefore, I acknowledge the more freely that no temporal vicissitudes can move my mind from its steady guardianship of thy love. But the flames of that love burn the stronger in me, since I know that, through the merits of thy prayers, I have come to a harbor of some quiet. And so again I humbly beg thee, deign to offer thy intercession before God for my poor self, that His grace may keep me safe under thy protection.

I would also have thee know that the book, *The Sufferings of the Martyrs*, which thou didst ask to have sent thee, I have not yet been able to obtain, but I shall send it when I can. And do thou, my beloved, send to console me what thou hast promised in thy kindest of letters, some selections from the Holy Scriptures.

I beg, too, that thou wilt offer holy masses for my relative . . . who was dear to me beyond all others. With this messenger I send thee now fifty shillings and an altar pall, because I could not get larger gifts. But these, though small, are sent with my fondest love.

23. Bishop Daniel's Instructions to St. Boniface [3]

Out of devotion and goodwill I have sought to make to thy prudence a few suggestions, that thou mayst know how best

[1] Pope Gregory II.

[2] A heathen king of the Frisians, among whom St. Boniface had labored for a short time before undertaking the mission to Germany. It is said that Rathbod, having agreed to be baptized, had already set his foot in the water, when he stopped to ask whether his forefathers were in heaven or hell. On being told their fate, he cried, "I prefer to be with my ancestors in hell than with a few beggars in heaven," and rejected the sacrament.

[3] Boniface, *Epistolæ*, No. 5.

in my judgment to overcome promptly the obstinacy of ignorant minds. Thou shouldst not offer opposition to the heathen concerning the genealogy of their false gods. Thou shouldst allow them, rather, to claim that their deities were born of human parents; then thou canst show that gods and goddesses who were born after the manner of men were men rather than gods, and because they existed not before, had therefore a beginning.

When they have learned perforce that the gods had a beginning, since some were born of others, they must be asked whether they think this universe had a beginning or was always in existence. If it had a beginning, who created it? For certainly they cannot find for the gods begotten before the establishment of the universe any place where these could exist and dwell; by the universe I mean, not merely the visible earth and sky, but the whole extent of space, which the heathen themselves can grasp with the imagination. But if they maintain that the universe always existed without a beginning, seek to refute and convince them by many arguments and proofs; if they go on contending, ask them: Who ruled it? How did the gods reduce beneath their sway and bring under their jurisdiction a universe that existed before them? . . . Do they think that the gods should be worshiped for temporal and present blessings, or for an eternal and future reward? If for a temporal, let them show in what respect the heathen are happier than the Christians. What again do the heathen by their sacrifices mean to confer upon their gods, who have all things under their sway; or why do the gods leave it in the power of those subject to them to decide what tribute to offer? If they need such things, why could they not themselves have made a better choice? If they do not need them, the people are wrong to suppose that the gods can be appeased with such offerings of victims.

These questions, and many like them, which it would take too long to enumerate, thou shouldst propose to them in no irritating or offensive manner, but with the greatest calmness

and moderation. And from time to time their superstitions should be compared with our Christian dogmas, and touched upon indirectly, so that the heathen, more out of confusion than exasperation, may blush for their absurd opinions and recognize that their detestable rites and legends do not escape our notice.

It would also be natural to infer that, if their gods are omnipotent and beneficent and just, not only do they reward their worshipers but punish those who despise them. But if they do both in the temporal order, why do they spare the Christians, who turn nearly the whole world from their worship and disregard their regulations. And the Christians possess the fertile lands and the provinces fruitful in wine and olives and overflowing with other riches, and have left them, that is, the heathen with their gods, only the frozen lands in which these latter are wrongly thought to hold sway. . . .

And that they may not boast of the sway of the gods over these people as legitimate and existing always from the beginning, point out to them that the whole world was given over to the worship of idols until, illuminated by the knowledge of the Omnipotent God, its creator and ruler, it was vivified through the grace of Christ and reconciled to God. For when among Christians the children of the faithful are baptized daily, what do they do but purify themselves singly from the uncleanness and guilt of paganism in which the whole world was once involved? . . .

24. St. Boniface Asks for Prayers[1]

In the following letter St. Boniface requests Eadburga, abbess of Thanet, to pray for him and for the heathen. The letter seems to have been written at a time when he was greatly distressed at the obstacles his mission met among the Germans and also among apostate churchmen. "Everywhere toil, everywhere sorrow."

We beseech your loving clemency with heartfelt prayers to deign to intercede for us with the Author of all. That you

[1] Boniface, *Epistolæ*, No. 28.

may not be ignorant of the cause of this prayer, know that because of our sins the course of our mission is threatened by many storms. Everywhere toil, everywhere sorrow. "Without, fightings, within, fears."[1] And most serious of all, the snares of false brethren surpass the malice of the heathen. Wherefore, entreat the sacred defender of my life, the one safe refuge of those in trouble, "the lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world,"[2] with His protecting hand to keep me unharmed, as I pass through the lairs of such wolves; that where there should be found the fair feet of those who carry the lamp of the gospel of peace, there may not be discovered the footsteps of apostates who wander in darkness. . . .

Meantime I pray you of your goodness to intercede for those heathen who have been intrusted to us by the Apostolic See; that the Savior of the world may snatch them from the worship of idols and unite them with the sons of their true mother, the Catholic Church, to the praise and glory of His name, "Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."[3]

25. How St. Boniface Ruled[4]

Some passages in a letter from St. Boniface to the archbishop of Canterbury give an excellent idea of his abilities as an administrator and of his devotion to the Roman Church. The letter belongs to the year 747.

We decreed and acknowledged in our synod that we wished to preserve to the end of our lives the Catholic faith and unity and submission to the Roman Church; that we bowed to St. Peter and to his vicar; that we should call a synod together every year; that the metropolitans would seek their palls[5] from the Holy See; and that we desired to follow in everything the precepts of St. Peter, so as to be numbered among the sheep intrusted to him. To this profession we all agreed and set our hands. We forwarded it to the church of St. Peter, Prince

[1] 2 *Corinthians*, vii, 5. [2] *John*, i, 29. [3] 1 *Timothy*, ii, 4.
[4] Boniface, *Epistolæ*, No. 42.
[5] The *pallium* was the distinctive vestment of an archbishop, or metropolitan.

of the Apostles, where the Roman clergy and the pope received it with rejoicing.

We determined that each year the canonical decrees and the laws of the Church and the rule of the monastic life should be read and reënacted in the synod. We decreed that the metropolitan who has received the dignity of the pall should exhort and admonish the rest and examine who among them is concerned about the welfare of the people, and who is careless. The servants of God we forbade to hunt and wander in the woods with dogs and to keep hawks and falcons. We decreed that each year each priest should give to his bishop at Easter an account of his labors, reporting on the Catholic faith and baptism and on the whole order of his ministry. We decreed that each year each bishop should go carefully through his diocese, to confirm the people, to teach them, and to examine into and prohibit pagan practices, divinations, drawing of lots, auguries, incantations, and all unclean customs of the Gentiles. We forbade the servants of God to wear showy dress and military cloaks or to use arms. . . .

For the rest, dear brother, equal toil but greater danger hangs over us than over other priests, because the ancient canons enjoin the metropolitan to undertake the care of a whole province, and, to express my fears in a metaphor, we have undertaken to steer the ship among the waves of a savage sea, though we can neither guide it carefully nor lose it without a sin. . . . Therefore, the Church, which, like a great ship, sails over the sea of the world and is buffeted by the many waves of temptation in this life, must not be abandoned but steered.

26. St. Boniface's Martyrdom [1]

After nearly forty years of work in Germany, St. Boniface went to Frisia (modern Holland), his original mission field. There in 754, at the hands of its heathen inhabitants, he suffered martyrdom. How great was the regard in which the saint was held appears from a letter written by the archbishop of Canterbury to some of Boniface's friends and companions in Germany.

[1] Boniface, *Epistolæ*, No. 47.

When we are told of any injury done to your Church, or any loss inflicted upon it, grief and sadness distress us; just as we share your joy in Christ, so do we mourn for Christ's sake over your adversities. For never can be obliterated from our memory the diverse and unceasing tribulations and sufferings which we in our hearts, but you with our father beloved of God, the martyr Boniface, long endured among persecuting pagans and leaders of heresy and schism on such a dangerous and barbarous mission. Now, when in the agony of martyrdom he has departed gloriously and happily with his companions to the everlasting rest of his heavenly home, you move with the more danger and difficulty, because you are deprived of such a father and teacher.

Though the bitterness of this grief afflicts us, yet a certain new and strong delight comes often to our minds to sweeten and lessen the sorrow. The more frequently we reflect thereon, the more joyously we thank God that the race of the English settled in Britain deserved to send forth from itself openly before the eyes of all to spiritual agonies such a famous investigator of the divine books and such a splendid soldier of Christ, together with well-trained and instructed disciples, to the safety of many souls. . . . What has really been accomplished the outcome of events proclaims more splendidly than words, especially in those places which no teacher before him sought to visit for the purpose of preaching. Wherefore . . . we lovingly place this man among the splendid and glorious champions of the orthodox faith, and praise and venerate him.

Accordingly, in our general synod — where we also conferred fully upon other things of which we can inform you only briefly — we determined to fix the day when he and the band with him suffered martyrdom, and to celebrate it with a solemn yearly feast. We seek him especially as our patron, along with the blessed Gregory[1] and Augustine[2]; we are indeed assured of having him for such before Christ our Lord, whom he always loved during his life, and whom in death he gloriously exalted.

[1] Pope Gregory the Great. [2] Missionary to the English.

CHAPTER VI

THE TEACHINGS OF MOHAMMED [1]

THE chief source of our knowledge concerning the teachings of Mohammed is, of course, the Koran. Many of the revelations composing this work were delivered by the prophet while in a state of trance, and these, together with his public speeches and prayers were gathered, shortly after his death, into the book as it now exists. There can be no doubt that the Koran is practically identical with the prophet's own words. But besides the Koran, there are the private utterances of Mohammed to his intimate friends and carefully treasured in their memories. These traditional sayings, or "Table-talk," are very numerous — more than seven thousand in the standard collection — but no one can tell how many represent the genuine words of the prophet. Pious Moslems, however, have accepted them as authentic, and have derived from them many rules for the guidance of Islam.

27. Prayer and Almsgiving [2]

It is not righteousness that ye turn your face toward the east or the west, but righteousness is in him who believeth in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Scriptures, and the prophets, and who giveth wealth for the love of God to his kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the son of

[1] *The Speeches and Table-talk of the Prophet Mohammad*, translated by Stanley Lane-Poole. London, 1882. Macmillan and Company.

[2] Lane-Poole, *Speeches and Table-talk*, pp. 133–135.

the road and them that ask and for the freeing of slaves, and who is instant in prayer, and giveth alms; and those who fulfill their covenant when they covenant, and the patient in adversity and affliction and in time of violence; these are they who are true, and these are they who fear God.

Say: We believe in God, and what hath been sent down to thee, and what was sent down to Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes of Israel, and what was given to Moses, and to Jesus, and the prophets from their Lord — we make no distinction between any of them — and to Him are we resigned: and whoso desireth other than Islam [1] for a religion, it shall certainly not be accepted from him, and in the life to come he shall be among the losers.

When the call to prayer soundeth on the Day of Congregation,[2] then hasten to remember God, and abandon business; that is better for you if ye only knew: and when prayer is done, disperse in the land and seek of the bounty of God.

Turn thy face toward the Sacred Mosque;[3] wherever ye be, turn your faces thitherwards.

Give alms on the path of God, and let not your hands cast you into destruction; but do good, for God loveth those who do good; and accomplish the pilgrimage and the visit to God: but if ye be besieged, then send what is easiest as an offering.

They will ask thee what they shall expend in alms; say, the surplus.

If ye give alms openly, it is well; but if ye conceal it, and give it to the poor, it is better for you and will take away from you some of your sins: and God knoweth what ye do.

Kind speech and forgiveness is better than alms which vexation followeth; and God is rich and ruthful.

28. Fasts and Pilgrimages [4]

O ye who believe, there is prescribed for you the fast as it was prescribed for those before you; maybe ye will fear God

[1] That is, Resignation.
[2] *Al Jum'a*, Friday, the Mohammedan Sabbath.
[3] At Mecca.
[4] Lane-Poole, *Speeches and Table-talk*, pp. 135–137.

for a certain number of days, but he among you who is sick or on a journey may fast a like number of other days. And for those who are able to fast and do not, the expiation is feeding a poor man; but he who voluntarily doeth a good act, it is better for him; and to fast is better for you, if ye only knew. The month of *Ramadan*, wherein the Koran was sent down for guidance to men, and for proofs of the guidance, and the distinguishing of good and evil; whoso among you seeth this month, let him fast in it; but he who is sick or on a journey, a like number of other days. . . .

Proclaim among the people a pilgrimage: let them come on foot and on every fleet camel to be present at its benefits to them, and to make mention of God's name at the appointed days over the beasts with which He hath provided them: then eat thereof, and feed the poor and needy; then let them end the neglect of their persons, and pay their vows, and make the circuit of the ancient House.[1]

Do ye place the giving drink to the pilgrims, and the visiting of the Sacred Mosque, on the same level with him who believeth in God and the Last Day, and fighteth on the path of God? They are not equal in the sight of God.

29. Prohibitions[2]

Fight in the path of God with those who fight with you — but exceed not; verily God loveth not those who exceed. And kill them wheresoever ye find them, and thrust them out from whence they thrust you out; for dissent is worse than slaughter; but fight them not at the Sacred Mosque, unless they fight you there: but if they fight you, then kill them: such is the reward of the infidels! But if they desist, then verily God is forgiving and merciful. But fight them till there be no dissent, and the worship be only to God; but, if they desist, then let there be no hostility save against the transgressors.

[1] The Kaaba, or chief sanctuary of Mecca.

[2] Lane-Poole, *Letters and Table-talk*, pp. 137–138.

They will ask thee of the sacred month,[1] and fighting therein; say, Fighting therein is a great sin; but turning people away from God's path, and disbelief in Him and in the Sacred Mosque, and turning His people out therefrom, is a greater sin in God's sight, and dissent is a greater sin than slaughter.

Forbidden to you is that which dieth of itself, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that which is dedicated to other than God, and what is strangled, and what is killed by a blow, or by falling, and what is gored, and what wild beasts have preyed on, and what is sacrificed to idols; and to divine by the divination of arrows, that is transgression in you.

Make not God the butt of your oaths, that ye may be pious and fear God, and make peace among men, for God heareth and knoweth.

O ye who believe, verily wine and gambling and statues and divining arrows are only an abomination of the Devil's making: avoid them then; haply ye may prosper.

30. Civil and Criminal Law[2]

It is not for a believer to kill a believer, but by mistake; and whoso killeth a believer by mistake must free a believing slave; and the blood-price must be paid to his family, unless they remit it in alms. . . . And whoso killeth a believer on purpose, his reward is hell, to abide therein forever, and God will be wroth with him, and curse him, and prepare for him a mighty torment.

O ye who believe! Retaliation is prescribed for you for the slain: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the woman, yet for him who is remitted aught by his brother, shall be prosecution in reason and payment in generosity. . . .

The man thief and the woman thief, cut off the hands of both in requital for what they have done: an example from God, for God is mighty and wise.

[1] The month of *Ramadan*.

[2] Lane-Poole, *Speeches and Table-talk*, pp. 139–143.

They who practice usury shall not rise again, save as he riseth whom the Devil hath smitten with his touch; that is because they say, "Selling is only like usury": but God hath allowed selling, and forbidden usury.

Marry those of you who are single, and the good among your servants, and your handmaidens. If they be poor, God of his bounty will enrich them, and God is liberal and wise. And let those who cannot find a match, live in chastity, till God of His bounty shall enrich them.

Wed not idolatrous women until they believe, for surely a believing handmaiden is better than an idolatress, although she captivate you. And wed not idolaters until they believe, for a believing slave is better than the idolater, although he charm you.

Divorce may be twice: then take wives in reason or let them go with kindness. . . . And for the divorced there should be a maintenance in reason: this is a duty on those who fear God. . . .

It is prescribed for you that, when one of you is at the point of death, if he leave property, the legacy is to his parents and to his kindred in reason — a duty upon those that fear God. . . .

These are God's statutes, and whoso obeyeth God and His prophet He will bring him into gardens, whereunder rivers flow, to abide therein for aye — that is the great prize! But whoso rebelleth against God and His prophet, and transgresseth His statutes, He will bring him into fire, to dwell therein for aye; and his shall be a shameful torment.

31. Traditional Sayings [1]

When God created the creation, He wrote a book, which is near Him upon His throne; and what is written in it is this: "Verily my compassion overcometh my wrath."

Say not, if people do good to us, we will do good to them, and if people oppress us, we will oppress them: but resolve

[1] Lane-Poole, *Speeches and Table-talk*, pp. 147–182.

that if people do good to you, you will do good to them, and if they oppress you, oppress them not again.

The most excellent of all actions is to befriend anyone on God's account, and to be at enmity with whosoever is the enemy of God.

When a Moslem performeth the ablution, it washeth from his face those faults which he may have cast his eyes upon; and when he washeth his hands, it removeth the faults they may have committed, and when he washeth his feet, it dispelleth the faults toward which they may have carried him; so that he will rise up in purity from the place of ablution.

A man's giving in alms one piece of silver in his lifetime is better for him than giving one hundred when about to die.

Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and free the captive if he be unjustly bound.

A keeper of fasts, who doth not abandon lying and slandering, God careth not about his leaving off eating and drinking.

Read the Koran constantly: I sware by Him in the hands of whose might is my life, verily the Koran runneth away faster than a camel which is not tied by the leg.

The Prophet hath cursed ten persons on account of wine: one, the first extractor of the juice of the grape for others; the second for himself; the third the drinker of it; the fourth the bearer of it; the fifth the person to whom it is brought; the sixth the waiter; the seventh the seller of it; the eighth the eater of its price; the ninth the buyer of it; the tenth that person who hath purchased it for another.

Merchants shall be raised up liars on the Day of Resurrection, except he who abstaineth from that which is unlawful, and doth not swear falsely, but speaketh truth as to the price of his goods.

The taker of interest and the giver of it, and the writer of its papers and the witness to it, are equal in crime.

The bringers of grain to the city to sell at a cheap rate gain immense advantage by it, and he who keepeth back grain in order to sell at a high rate is cursed.

He who desireth that God should redeem him from the sorrows and difficulties of the Day of Resurrection must delay in calling on poor debtors, or forgive the debt in part or whole.

Give the laborer his wage before his perspiration be dry.

I swear by God, in whose hand is my life, that marching about morning and evening to fight for religion is better than the world and everything that is in it: and verily the standing of one of you in the line of battle is better than prayers performed in your house for sixty years.

No judge must decide between two persons while he is angry.

The world and all things in it are valuable, but the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.

Admonish your wives with kindness; for women were created out of a crooked rib of Adam, therefore if ye wish to straighten it, ye will break it; and if ye let it alone, it will always be crooked.

Every woman who dieth, and her husband is pleased with her, shall enter into paradise.

That which is lawful but disliked by God is divorce.

Do not prevent your women from coming to the mosque; but their homes are better for them.

God has ordained that your brothers should be your slaves: therefore him whom God hath ordained to be the slave of his brother, his brother must give him of the food which he eateth himself, and of the clothes wherewith he clotheth himself, and not order him to do anything beyond his power, and if he doth order such a work, he must himself assist him in doing it.

He who beateth his slave without fault, or slappeth him in the face, his atonement for this is freeing him.

A man who behaveth ill to his slave will not enter into paradise.

Forgive thy servant seventy times a day.

Fear God in respect of animals: ride them when they are fit to be ridden, and get off when they are tired.

Whosoever believeth in God and the Day of Resurrection must respect his guest, and the time of being kind to him is one

day and one night, and the period of entertaining him is three days, and after that, if he doeth it longer, he benefiteth him more. It is not right for a guest to stay in the house of the host so long as to inconvenience him.

Verily a king is God's shadow upon the earth; and everyone oppressed turneth to him: then when the king doeth justice, for him are rewards and gratitude from his subjects: but, if the king oppresseth, on him is sin, and for the oppressed resignation.

Every painter is in hell fire: and God will appoint a person at the Day of Resurrection for every picture he shall have drawn, to punish him, and they will punish him in hell. Then if you must make pictures, make them of trees and things without souls.

O servants of God use medicine: because God hath not created a pain without a remedy for it, except age; for that is a pain without a remedy.

Whoso pursueth the road of knowledge, God will direct him to the road of paradise; and verily the angels spread their arms to receive him who seeketh after knowledge; and everything in heaven and earth will ask grace for him; and verily the superiority of a learned man over a mere worshiper is like that of the full moon over all the stars.

Be not extravagant in praising me, as the Christians are in praising Jesus, Mary's Son, by calling him God, and the Son of God; I am only the Lord's servant; then call me the servant of God, and His messenger.

Wish not for death any one of you; either a doer of good works, for peradventure he may increase them by an increase of life; or an offender, for perhaps he may obtain the forgiveness of God by repentance.

I am no more than man; when I order you anything with respect to religion, receive it, and when I order you about the affairs of the world, then I am nothing more than man.

CHAPTER VII

THE SAGA OF A VIKING [1]

THE *Heimskringla* is a collection of the sagas relating to the early Norwegian kings. It was composed in the thirteenth century by the Icelandic historian and poet, Snorre Sturlason. Iceland, at the time he wrote, was rich in legends and skaldic poems. Snorre learned from them all, but he told the story in his own way, artistically, and at the same time with such accuracy as he could command. One of the most interesting of the sagas in the *Heimskringla* deals with the life of Olaf Trygvesson, who reigned in Norway between the years 995–1000. In character this king was a typical Viking.

32. Olaf's Early Career [2]

Olaf, the son of a Norwegian king, was only three years old when his mother set out with him for Russia, where the Northmen had settled. On the way there they were captured by Esthonian pirates. Olaf fell to the share of an Esthonian named Klerkon, who sold him into slavery. Olaf's uncle, Sigurd, found him in Esthonia, paid his ransom, and brought him to Novgorod in Russia. Sigurd at first did not disclose his relationship to Olaf, but treated the boy with kindness.

Olaf was one day in the market place of Novgorod, where there was a great number of people. He there recognized Klerkon, who had killed his foster-father, Thoralf. Olaf had a little ax in his hand, and with it he clove Klerkon's skull down to the brain, and then ran home and told his friend Sigurd

[1] *Heimskringla. The Olaf Sagas,* by Snorre Sturlason. The translation by Samuel Laing, revised by John Beveridge. London, 1915. J. M. Dent and Sons.

[2] *Olaf Trygvesson's Saga,* chs. 7, 21, 30, 32–34.

what he had done. Sigurd immediately took Olaf to Queen Olga's house, told her what had happened, and begged her to protect the boy. She replied that Olaf was too comely a boy to be slain; and she ordered her people to be drawn out fully armed. In Novgorod the sacredness of peace is so respected, that it is law there to slay anyone who puts a man to death except by judgment of law; and, according to this law and usage, the whole people stormed and sought after the boy. . . . It was settled at last that the king should name the fine for the murder; and the queen paid it.

Olaf remained afterwards with the queen, and was much beloved. It is a law at Novgorod that no man of royal descent shall stay there without the king's permission. Sigurd therefore told the queen of what family Olaf was . . . and asked her to speak to the king about it. She did so, and begged her husband to help a king's son whose fate had been so hard; and in consequence of her request the king promised to assist him. Accordingly he received Olaf into his court and treated him nobly. Olaf was nine years old when he came to Russia, and he remained nine years more with King Valdemar. Olaf was the handsomest of men, very stout and strong, and in all bodily exercises he excelled every Northman that ever was heard of.

But many envied Olaf because he was so favored by the king and queen.

They hinted to the king that he should take care not to make Olaf too powerful. "Such a man," said they, "may be dangerous to you, if he were to allow himself to be used for the purpose of doing you or your kingdom harm; for he is extremely expert in all exercises and feats and is very popular. We do not, indeed, know what it is he can have to talk of so often with the queen." . . . So it fell out that the king listened to such speeches, and became somewhat silent and blunt toward Olaf. When Olaf observed this, he told it to the queen. He said, also, that he desired to travel to the Northern land, where his family formerly had power and kingdoms and where it was

most likely he would advance himself. The queen wished him a prosperous journey, and said he would be found a brave man wherever he might be. Olaf then made ready, went on board, and set out to sea in the Baltic.

As he was coming from the east he made the island of Bornholm, where he landed and plundered. The country people hastened down to the strand and gave him battle; but Olaf gained the victory and a large booty. . . . While Olaf lay at Bornholm there came on bad weather, storm and a heavy sea, so that his ships could not lie there; and he sailed southwards to Wendland,[1] where they found a good harbor. They conducted themselves very peacefully and remained some time.

Olaf married the queen of Wendland and ruled over her dominions.

Olaf was three years in Wendland when Geyra, his queen, fell sick, and she died of her illness. Olaf felt his loss so great that he now had no pleasure in Wendland. He provided himself, therefore, with warships, and went out again on plundering expeditions. He plundered first in Friesland, next in Saxony, and then all the way to Flanders. . . . Thereafter Olaf sailed to England and ravaged far and wide in the land. He sailed all the way north to Northumberland, where he plundered; and thence to Scotland. Then he went to the Hebrides, where he fought some battles; and then southwards to Man, where he also fought. He ravaged the country of Ireland, and thence steered to Wales, which he laid waste with fire and sword, and also the district called Cumberland. He then sailed southward to the west coast of France and plundered there. When he left the south, intending to sail to England, he came to the Scilly Islands, lying westward from England in the ocean. . . . Olaf had been four years on this cruise from the time he left Wendland till he came to the Scilly Islands.

It was at this time that the heathen Viking accepted Christianity.

[1] The land of the Wends, a Slavic people who then occupied the coast from the mouth of the Vistula westward.

While Olaf lay in the Scilly Islands he heard of a seer, who could tell beforehand things not yet done, and what he foretold many believed was really fulfilled. Olaf became curious to try this man's gift of prophecy. He therefore sent one of his men, who was the handsomest and strongest, clothed him magnificently, and bade him say he was the king; for Olaf was known in all countries as handsomer, stronger, and braver than all others, although, after he had left Russia, he retained no more of his name than that he was called Ole, and was Russian. Now when the messenger came to the seer and gave himself out for the king, he got the answer, "Thou art not the king, but I advise thee to be faithful to thy king." And more he would not say to that man. The man returned and told Olaf, and his desire to meet the seer was increased; and now he had no doubt of his being really a seer.

Olaf himself went to him and, entering into conversation, asked him if he could foresee how it would go with him with regard to his kingdom, or of any other fortune he was to have. The seer replied in a holy spirit of prophecy, "Thou wilt become a renowned king and do celebrated deeds. Many men wilt thou bring to faith and baptism, and both to thy own and others' good; and that thou mayst have no doubt of the truth of this answer, listen to these tokens: When thou comest to thy ships many of thy people will conspire against thee, and then a battle will follow in which many of thy men will fall, and thou wilt be wounded almost to death, and carried upon a shield to thy ship; yet after seven days thou shalt be well of thy wounds, and immediately thou shalt let thyself be baptized."

Soon after Olaf went down to his ships, where he met some mutineers and people who would destroy him and his men. A fight took place, and the result was what the seer had predicted. Olaf was wounded, and carried upon a shield to his ship, and his wound was healed in seven days. Then Olaf perceived that the man had spoken truth. Olaf went once more to the seer, and asked particularly how he came to have such wisdom in foreseeing things to be. The hermit replied

that the Christian's God himself let him know all that he desired, and he brought before Olaf many great proofs of the power of the Almighty. In consequence of this encouragement Olaf agreed to let himself be baptized, and he and all his followers were baptized forthwith. He remained here a long time, took the true faith, and got with him priests and other learned men.

From the Scilly Islands Olaf proceeded to England. He did not ravage the country, because he was now a Christian.

At this time a summons to a Thing [1] went through the country, that all men should come to hold a Thing. Now when the Thing was assembled, a queen called Gyda came to it, a daughter of Olaf Kvaran, who was king of Dublin in Ireland. She had been married to a great earl in England, and after his death she was at the head of his dominions. In her territory there was a man called Alfin, who was a great champion and single-combat man. He had paid his addresses to her; but she answered that she herself would choose what man in her dominions she would take in marriage; and on that account the Thing was assembled. Alfin came to the assembly dressed in his best clothes, and there were many well-dressed men at the meeting. Olaf had come there also; but had on his bad-weather clothes, and a coarse over-garment, and stood with his people apart from the rest of the crowd. Gyda went round and looked at each, to see if any appeared to her a suitable man. Now when she came to where Olaf stood, she looked at him straight in the face, and asked, "What sort of man are you?"

He said, "I am called Ole; and I am a stranger here."

Gyda replied, "Wilt thou have me if I choose thee?"

"I will not say no to that," answered he; and he asked what her name was, and her family, and descent.

"I am called Gyda," said she, "and am the daughter of the king of Ireland, and was married in this country to an earl who ruled over this territory. Since his death I have ruled

[1] A general assembly.

over it, and many have courted me, but none to whom I would choose to be married."

She was a young and handsome woman. They afterwards talked over the matter together and agreed, and so Olaf and Gyda were betrothed.

Alfin was very ill pleased with this. It was the custom then in England, if two men strove for anything, to settle the matter by single combat; and now Alfin challenged Olaf to fight about this business. The time and place for the duel were settled. Each combatant was to have twelve men with him. When they met, Olaf told his men to do exactly as they saw him do. He had a large ax; and when Alfin was going to cut at him with his sword, he hewed away the sword out of his hand and with the next blow struck down Alfin himself. He then bound him fast. It went in the same way with all Alfin's men. They were beaten down, bound, and carried to Olaf's lodging. Thereupon he ordered Alfin to quit the country, and never appear in it again; and Olaf took all his property. Olaf in this way got Gyda in marriage, and lived sometimes in England and sometimes in Ireland.

33. Olaf as King of Norway[1]

After living several years in the British Isles, Olaf went to Norway, then under the unpopular rule of Earl Haakon. The Norwegians unanimously accepted Olaf as king. He now set about the conversion of the country to Christianity. One of his first acts was to get rid of the heathen magicians, who exerted much influence over the people.

Then Olaf proceeded to Tunsberg, and held a Thing, at which he declared in a speech that all the men of whom it should be known to a certainty that they dealt with evil spirits or in witchcraft should be banished from the land. Thereafter the king had all the neighborhood ransacked for such people, and called them all before him; and when they were brought to the Thing, there was a man among them called Eyvind

[1] *Olaf Trygvesson's Saga*, chs. 69, 75–76, 92.

Kellda, a sorcerer, and particularly knowing in witchcraft. Olaf let all these men be seated in one room, which was well adorned, and made a great feast for them and gave them strong drink in plenty. Now when they were all very drunk, he ordered the house to be set on fire, and all the people within it were consumed, except Eyvind Kellda, who contrived to escape by the smoke hole in the roof. And when he had got a long way off, he met some people on the road going to the king, and he told them to tell the king that Eyvind Kellda had slipped away from the fire and would never come again in Olaf's power, but would carry on his arts of witchcraft as much as ever.

How Olaf spread Christianity by the sword is thus related.

King Olaf went with all his forces into the Drontheim country; and when he came to Mære, all among the chiefs of the Drontheim people who were most opposed to Christianity were assembled, and had with them all the great bonders[1] who had before made sacrifice at that place. Now the king let the people be summoned to the Thing, where both parties met armed; and when the Thing was seated the king made a speech, in which he told the people to go over to Christianity. Jern Skiægge (Iron Beard) replied on the part of the bonders and said that the will of the bonders was now, as formerly, that Olaf should not break their laws. "We want, king," said he, "that thou shouldst offer sacrifice, as other kings before thee have done." All the bonders applauded his speech with a loud shout and said they would have all things according to what Jern Skiægge said. Then Olaf said he would go into the temple of their gods with them and see what the practices were when they sacrificed. The bonders thought well of this proceeding, and both parties went to the temple.

Now Olaf entered into the temple with a few of his men and a few bonders; and when the king came to where their gods were, Thor, as the most considered among their gods, sat there adorned with gold and silver. Olaf lifted up his gold-inlaid

[1] Landowners.

ax, which he carried in his hands, and struck Thor so that the image rolled down from its seat. Then the king's men turned to and threw down all the gods from their seats; and while the king was in the temple, Jern Skiægge was killed outside of the temple doors, and the king's men did it. When Olaf came forth out of the temple he offered the bonders two conditions — that all should accept Christianity forthwith, or that they should fight with him. But as Jern Skiægge was killed, there was no leader in the bonders' army to raise the banner against Olaf; so they took the other condition, to surrender to his will and obey his order. Then Olaf had all the people present baptized and took hostages from them for their remaining true to Christianity; and he sent his men around to every district, and no man in the Drontheim country opposed Christianity, but all people took baptism.

Olaf's character and personality are thus described.

Olaf was more expert in all exercises than any man in Norway whose memory is preserved to us in sagas; and he was stronger and more agile than most men, and many stories are written down about it. One is, that he ascended the Smalsar Horn and fixed his shield upon the very peak. Another is, that one of his followers had climbed up the peak after him until he came to where he could neither get up nor down; but the king came to his help, climbed up to him, took him under his arm, and bore him to the flat ground. Olaf could run across the oars outside of his vessel while his men were rowing it. He could play with three daggers, so that one was always in the air, and he took the one falling by the handle. He could walk all round upon the ship's rails, could strike and cut equally well with both hands, and could cast two spears at once. Olaf was a merry, frolicsome man; gay and social; had great taste in everything; was very generous; was very finical in his dress, but in battle he exceeded all in bravery. He was distinguished for cruelty when he was enraged, and tortured many of his enemies. Some he burnt in fire; some he had torn in pieces

by mad dogs; some he had mutilated, or cast down from high precipices. On this account his friends were attached to him warmly and his enemies feared him greatly; and thus he made such a fortunate advance in his undertakings, for some obeyed his will out of the friendliest zeal and others out of dread.

Olaf had a short reign. In the year 1000, while on an expedition against Denmark, he was attacked by the combined Swedish and Danish fleets, together with the ships of Earl Haakon's sons. The battle ended in the destruction of the Norwegian fleet. Olaf fought to the last on his great vessel, the *Long Serpent*, and finally leaped overboard. After his death he remained the hero of his people, who believed that he was still alive and looked for his return. "However that may be," says the saga, "Olaf Trygvesson never came back to his kingdom in Norway."

CHAPTER VIII

ALFRED THE GREAT[1]

EINHARD and Asser, the authors of two of the most important biographies written in the early Middle Ages, have some points in common. Both were monks with a talent for letters, both lived at the court of their respective heroes, and both wrote short accounts of them, based largely on personal experience and observation. Just as we turn to Einhard for the best contemporary description of Charlemagne, so we go to Asser for the liveliest and most authentic presentation of the famous English king. Asser's *Life* is provokingly brief; it is confused in arrangement; and it is often crabbed in style. But it supplies us with most of our knowledge concerning a king who was not merely great but also truly good, one whom later ages have delighted to remember as "England's Darling," "England's Shepherd," and "Alfred the Truthteller."

34. Alfred's Zeal for Study[2]

It chanced on a certain day that his mother showed to him and his brothers a book of Saxon poetry, which she had in her hand, and said, "I will give this book to that one among you who shall the most quickly learn it." Then, moved at these words, or rather by the inspiration of God, and being carried away by the beauty of the initial letter in that book, antici-

[1] *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, translated by L. C. Jane. London, 1908. Chatto and Windus.

[2] Asser, *Annales rerum gestarum Alfredi Magni*, chs. 23–25.

pating his brothers who surpassed him in years but not in grace, he answered his mother and said, "Will you of a truth give that book to one of us? To him who shall soonest understand it and repeat it to you?" And at this she smiled and said again, "I will give it to him." Then forthwith he took the book from her hand, went to his master, and read it; and when he had read it he brought it back to his mother and repeated it to her.

After this he learnt the Daily Course, that is, the services for each hour, and then some psalms and many prayers. These were collected in one book, which, as we have ourselves seen, he constantly carried about with him everywhere in the fold of his cloak, for the sake of prayer amid all the passing events of this present life. But, alas! the art of reading which he most earnestly desired he did not acquire in accordance with his wish, because, as he was wont himself to say, in those days there were no men really skilled in reading throughout the whole realm of the West Saxons.

With many complaints and with heartfelt regrets he used to declare that among all the difficulties and trials of his life this was the greatest. For at the time when he was of an age to learn, and had leisure and ability for it, he had no masters; but when he was older, and indeed to a certain extent had anxious masters and writers, he could not read. For he was occupied by day and night without ceasing with illnesses unknown to all the physicians of the time, with the cares of the royal office both at home and abroad, and with the assaults of the heathen by land and sea. None the less, amid these difficulties from his infancy to the present day, he has not faltered in his earnest pursuit of knowledge, nor does he even now cease to long for it, nor, as I think, will he ever do so until the end of his life.

35. Character and Virtues of Alfred [1]

Amid the wars and many hindrances of his life, and amid the assaults of the pagans and his daily illness, Alfred ceased

[1] Asser, *Annales rerum gestarum Alfredi Magni*, ch. 76.

not from the government of the kingdom and from the pursuit of every form of hunting. Nor did he omit to instruct also his goldsmiths and all his artificers, his falconers and his huntsmen and the keepers of his dogs; nor to make, according to new designs of his own, articles of goldsmiths' work, more precious than had been the wont of all his predecessors. He was constant in the reading of books in the Saxon tongue, and more especially in committing to memory the Saxon poems and in commanding others to do so. And he by himself labored most zealously with all his might.

Moreover, he heard the divine offices daily, the mass, and certain psalms and prayers. He observed the services of the hours by day and by night, and oftentimes was he accustomed, without the knowledge of his men, to go in the night to the churches for the sake of prayer. He was zealous in the giving of alms, and generous toward his own people and to those who came from all nations. He was especially kind toward all men, and merry. And to the searching out of things not known did he apply himself with all his heart. . . .

He was eager and anxious to hear the Holy Scripture read to him by his own folk, but he would also as readily pray with strangers, if by any chance one had come from any place. Moreover, he loved with wonderful affection his bishops and all the clergy, his earldormen and nobles, his servants and all his household. And cherishing their sons, who were brought up in the royal household, with no less love than he bore toward his own children, he ceased not day and night to teach them all virtue and to make them well acquainted with letters.

But it was as though he found no comfort in all these things. For, as if he suffered no other care from within or without, he would make complaint to the Lord and to all who were joined to him in close affection, lamenting with many sighs that God had not made him skilled in divine wisdom and in the liberal arts. . . . He would obtain, wherever he could, those who might assist his righteous intention and who might be able to aid him in acquiring the wisdom for which he longed.

36. Alfred's Handbook [1]

In the year 887 Alfred, by the inspiration of God, began first to read and to interpret at the same time on one and the same day. But that the matter may be quite clear to those who know it not, I will take care to explain the reason for this late beginning.

When we were one day sitting together in the royal chamber and were holding converse upon various topics, it chanced that I repeated to him a quotation from a certain book. And when he had listened attentively to this and had carefully pondered it in his mind, suddenly he showed me a little book, which he carried constantly in the fold of his cloak. In it were written the Daily Course, and certain psalms, and some prayers, which he had read in his youth, and he commanded that I should write that quotation in this same little book.

When I heard this and knew in part his zealous devotion toward the study of the wisdom of God, I raised my hands to heaven and gave great thanks, though in silence, to God, who had put such zeal for the study of wisdom in the royal heart. But I found no empty space in the book where I might write that quotation, since it was altogether filled with many matters. Therefore I hesitated for a little while, especially because I was eager to provoke the excellent understanding of the king to a greater knowledge of the witness of God.

And when he urged me to write as quickly as possible, I said to him, "Are you willing for me to write that quotation apart by itself on some small leaf? For we may find at some future time another quotation which will please you; and if it should so turn out unexpectedly, we shall rejoice that we have kept this apart from the rest."

When he heard this, he said, "Your counsel is good." And I, hearing this and being glad, made ready a book of several leaves, and at the beginning of it I wrote that quotation

[1] Asser, *Annales rerum gestarum Alfredi Magni*, chs. 87–89.

according to his command. On the same day, by his order, I wrote in the same book no less than three other quotations pleasing to him, as I had foretold. And afterwards, day by day, in the course of the talk between us, as we kept our attention on this, other quotations, just as pleasing, were found and were written in the book. . . .

Now from the time of the writing of that first quotation, he strove earnestly to read and to translate into the Saxon tongue, and after that to teach many others. . . .

He began to learn the outlines of the Holy Scripture on the sacred feast of St. Martin. And after that he learned, as far as he might, the flowers which his masters had gathered on all sides, and he brought them all into the compass of a single book, until it became almost as large as a psalter. This volume he used to call his *Enchiridion*, that is, his *Handbook*, because with the utmost care he kept it at his hand day and night, and in it he found no small solace.

37. Alfred's Administration of Justice [1]

He was a careful searcher out of truth in judgments, and the more so owing to his care of the poor. On their behalf, amid all the other duties of this present life, he was wonderfully solicitous day and night. And, indeed, in all that realm the poor had no helpers, or but very few, save him alone, since almost all the great men and nobles of that land had turned their minds to secular rather than to heavenly works. And each regarded rather his own temporal advantage than the good of all.

And in judgment he sought earnestly the good of his people, gentle and simple. For they very often, at the meetings of the ealdormen and the reeves, disputed among them, so that hardly any of them would allow that the judgment of the ealdormen or reeves was right. And constantly driven by this obstinate disputing, they were desirous to submit to the

[1] Asser, *Annales rerum gestarum Alfredi Magni*, chs. 105–106.

judgment of the king alone, and straightway hastened from every side to secure it. Yet a man who knew that there was some wrong on his side in a dispute would not willingly go to the judgment of such a judge, though compelled to do so against his will in accordance with law and his promise. For he knew that in the presence of Alfred not one of his ill deeds could be concealed for a moment. Nor is that strange, since the king was very skillful in the execution of judgment as in all other things.

He carefully considered all the judgments of almost his whole realm, that had been given in his absence, as to what they were, whether just or unjust. And if he was able to discover any wrong in those judgments, he would gently summon the judges to him of his own accord, and either in person or by some other faithful men would question them as to why they had judged so wrongly. He would inquire whether it was from ignorance, or from ill-will of any sort, from love or fear of any man, or from hatred of others, or from greed of any man's money. Then if those judges professed that they had so judged because they could come to no better understanding of the matter, he would correct their inexperience and foolishness with discretion and moderation. . . .

And when they heard his words . . . the ealdormen and reeves would strive to turn themselves with all their might to the work of learning justice. Wherefore in a marvelous way almost all the ealdormen, reeves, and officers, who had been illiterate from infancy, studied the art of letters, preferring to learn an unwonted discipline with great toil than to lose the exercise of power.

CHAPTER IX

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR AND THE NORMANS IN ENGLAND[1]

WILLIAM of Malmesbury, the best English historian of the twelfth century, was of mixed English and Norman blood. For this reason he found it possible to judge fairly between the conquerors and the conquered, who, when he wrote, were gradually blending into one nation. William spent most of his life as a monk at Malmesbury, where he produced the historical compositions which gave him a high reputation among scholars. His most important book was a *Chronicle of the Kings of England*. It covers the years 449–1127, that is, the period from the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon conquest to nearly the close of the reign of the Norman king, Henry I. The earlier part of the work does not add very much to our knowledge, but from 1066 onward much material of historical interest can be gleaned from its pages.

38. Negotiations of William and Harold[2]

After the death of Edward the Confessor, England, fluctuating with doubtful favor, was uncertain to which ruler she should commit herself: to Harold, William, or Edgar:[3] for the king had recommended the last-mentioned also to the nobility, as nearest to the sovereignty in point of birth. Wherefore the

[1] *William of Malmesbury's Chronicle of the Kings of England*, the translation by John Sharpe, revised by J. A. Giles. London, 1847. George Bell and Sons.

[2] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, bk. iii.

[3] Edgar, called the Ætheling, was a grandson of the English king Edmund Ironside.

English were distracted in their choice, although all of them openly wished well to Harold. He, indeed, once dignified with the diadem, thought nothing of the covenant between himself and William. He said that he was absolved from his oath, because William's daughter, to whom he had been betrothed, had died before she was marriageable. . . . Moreover, supposing that the threats of William would never be put into execution, because he was occupied in wars with neighboring princes, Harold had, with his subjects, given full indulgence to security. Indeed, if he had not heard that the king of Norway was approaching, he would neither have condescended to collect troops nor to array them.

William, in the meantime, began mildly to address him by messengers; to expostulate on the broken covenant; to mingle threats with entreaties; and to warn him that, ere a year expired, he would claim his due by the sword. . . . Harold again rejoined what I have related concerning the nuptials of his daughter and added that William had been precipitate on the subject of the kingdom, in having confirmed to him by oath another's right, without the universal consent and edict of the Witenagemot and of the people; and, finally, that a rash oath ought to be broken. . . . In this way, confounded by either true or plausible arguments, the messengers returned without success.

39. Landing of the Normans in England [1]

At that time the prudence of William, seconded by the providence of God, already anticipated the invasion of England; and that no rashness might stain his just cause, he sent to the pope, formerly Anselm, bishop of Lucca, who had assumed the name of Alexander, alleging the justice of the war which he meditated with all the eloquence of which he was master. Harold omitted to do this, either because he was proud by nature or else distrusted his cause; or because he feared that his messengers would be obstructed by William and his partisans,

[1] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, bk. iii.

who beset every port. Pope Alexander, duly examining the pretensions of both parties, delivered a standard to William, as an auspicious presage of the kingdom. After receiving the standard, William summoned an assembly of his nobles for the purpose of ascertaining their sentiments on the proposed invasion. And when he had confirmed, by splendid promises, all who approved his design, he appointed them to prepare shipping, in proportion to the extent of their possessions. Thus they departed at that time; and in the month of August reassembled in a body at St. Vallery, for so that port is called by its new name.

Collecting, therefore, ships from every quarter, they awaited the propitious gale which was to carry them to their destination. When this delayed blowing for several days, the common soldiers, as is generally the case, began to mutter in their tents. They declared that a man who wished to subjugate a foreign country must be mad; that God, who opposed him, withheld the wind; that his father purposed a similar attempt and was in like manner frustrated; and that it was the fate of William's family to aspire to things beyond their reach and find God their adversary. In consequence of these things being publicly noised abroad, William held a council with his chiefs and ordered the body of St. Vallery to be brought forth and to be exposed to the open air, for the purpose of imploring a wind. No delay now interposed, but the wished-for-gale filled their sails. A joyful clamor then summoned every one to the ships.

William himself, after first launching from the shore into the deep, awaited the rest, at anchor, nearly in mid-channel. All then assembled round the crimson sail of the admiral's ship; and, after a favorable passage, arrived at Hastings.[1] As he disembarked he slipped down, but turned the accident to his advantage, for a soldier who stood near called out to him, "You hold England, my lord, its future king." He then restrained his whole army from plundering; warning them that they should now abstain from what must hereafter be their

[1] William landed at Pevensey, near Hastings, on September 28, 1066.

own; and for fifteen successive days he remained so perfectly quiet that he seemed to think of nothing less than of war.

40. The Battle of Hastings [1]

In the meantime Harold returned from the battle with the Norwegians,[2] happy at having conquered. . . . When the news of the arrival of the Normans reached him, he proceeded to Hastings, though accompanied by very few forces. No doubt the fates urged him on, as he neither summoned his troops, nor, had he been willing to do so, would he have found many ready to obey his call; so hostile were all to him, because he had appropriated the northern spoils entirely to himself. He sent out some persons, however, to reconnoiter the number and strength of the enemy. When these were captured and taken within the camp, William ordered them to be led among the tents, and after feasting them plentifully, to be sent back uninjured to their lord.

On their return, Harold inquired what news they brought. After relating what had befallen them, they added that almost all of William's army had the appearance of priests, as they had the whole face, with both lips, shaven. For the English leave the upper lip unshorn, suffering the hair continually to increase; which Julius Cæsar, in his treatise on the *Gallic War*, affirms to have been a national custom with the ancient inhabitants of Britain. Harold smiled at the simplicity of the relators, observing, with a pleasant laugh, that they were not priests, but soldiers, strong in arms and invincible in spirit.

Harold's brother, Girth, a youth on the verge of manhood, and of knowledge and valor surpassing his years, caught up his words: "Since," said he, "you extol so much the valor of the Norman, I think it ill-advised for you, who are his inferior in strength, to contend with him. Nor can you deny being bound to him by oath, either willingly or by compulsion. Wherefore you will act wisely, if you withdraw from this press-

[1] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, bk. iii.

[2] This was the battle of Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire.

ing emergency and allow us to try the issue of a battle. We, who are free from all obligation, shall justly draw the sword in defense of our country. If you engage, it is to be feared that you will be either subjected to flight or to death. If we alone fight, your cause will be safe at all events, for you will be able both to rally the fugitives and to avenge the dead."

The unbridled rashness of Harold yielded no placid ear to the words of his adviser. He thought it base, and a reproach to his past life, to turn his back on danger of any kind. With similar impudence, or to speak more favorably, imprudence, he drove away a monk, the messenger of William, not deigning him even a complacent look and swearing that God would decide between himself and the duke. The monk was the bearer of three propositions: either that Harold should relinquish the kingdom, according to his agreement; or hold it of William; or decide the matter by single combat in the sight of either army. For William claimed the kingdom on the ground that King Edward, by the advice of Stigand the archbishop and of the earls Godwin and Siward, had granted it to him, and had sent the son and nephew of Godwin to Normandy as sureties of the grant. If Harold should deny this, he would abide by the judgment of the pope, or by battle. William's messenger, being frustrated by the single answer to all of these propositions, returned and communicated to his party fresh spirit for the conflict.

The courageous leaders prepared for battle, each according to his national custom. The English passed the night[1] without sleep, in drinking and singing; and in the morning proceeded without delay against the enemy. All were on foot and were armed with battle-axes. Covering themselves in front by the junction of their shields, they formed an impenetrable body. They would have secured their safety that day had not the Normans, by a pretended flight, induced them to open their ranks. . . . King Harold himself stood with his brothers near the standard, in order that, while all shared equal danger,

[1] Friday night, October 13, 1066.

none might think of retreating. This same standard William sent, after his victory, to the pope. . . .

The Normans passed the whole night in confessing their sins and received the sacrament in the morning. Their infantry, with bows and arrows, formed the vanguard, while their cavalry occupied the rear. Duke William, declaring that God would favor his side, called for his arms. When, through the haste of his attendants, he had put on his hauberk [1] the rear part before, he corrected the mistake with a laugh, saying, "My dukedom shall be turned into a kingdom." Then, beginning to chant the *Song of Roland*,[2] and calling on God for assistance, the Normans engaged their foes.

They fought with ardor, neither side yielding ground, for the great part of the day. William now gave a signal to his troops that, by pretending flight, they should retreat. Through this device the close body of the English, opening for the purpose of cutting down the straggling enemy, brought upon itself swift destruction. For the Normans, facing about, attacked them, thus disordered, and compelled them to flee. In this manner, deceived by a stratagem, they met an honorable death in avenging their country; nor indeed were they at all without their own revenge, since, by frequently making a stand, they slaughtered their pursuers in heaps. . . . This alternation of first one party conquering, and then the other, prevailed as long as the life of Harold continued, but when he fell, his brain having been pierced with an arrow, the flight of the English ceased not until night.

In this battle the valor of both leaders was eminently conspicuous. Harold, not content with the duty of a general in exhorting others, diligently assumed every duty of a soldier. He would often strike the enemy when coming to close quarters, so that none would approach him with impunity; for immediately the same blow leveled both horse and rider. But, as I have related, after receiving the fatal arrow from a distance, he yielded to death. One of the Normans gashed his thigh

[1] A coat of mail made of interwoven metal rings.

[2] See page 160.

with a sword, as he lay prostrate; for which shameful and cowardly action the Norman was branded with ignominy by William and dismissed from the army. William was equally ready to encourage his soldiers by his voice and by his presence, and to be the first to rush forward to attack where the foe was thickest. Three choice horses were that day killed under him. The dauntless spirit and vigor of the intrepid leader still persisted, however, . . . till approaching night crowned him with complete victory. No doubt the hand of God so protected him, that the enemy should draw no blood from his person, though they aimed many javelins at him.

41. English and Norman Customs [1]

Before the coming of the Normans the English had adopted the customs of the Anglo-Saxons. These people at first were barbarians, warlike in their usages and heathen in their rites; but, after embracing the faith of Christ, they gave their whole attention to religion. . . . What shall I say of the multitude of bishops, hermits, and abbots? Does not the whole island blaze with such numerous relics of its natives, that you can scarcely pass a village of any consequence without hearing the name of some new saint? And of how many more has all remembrance perished, because of the absence of written records?

Nevertheless, the devotion to literature and religion had gradually declined for several years before the arrival of the Normans. The clergy, contented with a very slight degree of learning, could scarcely stammer out the words of the sacraments; and a person who understood grammar was an object of wonder and astonishment. The monks mocked the rule of their order by fine vestments and the use of every kind of food. The nobility, given up to luxury and wantonness, went not to church in the morning after the manner of Christians, but merely, in a careless manner, heard matins and masses from a hurrying priest in their chambers. The common people, left

[1] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, bk. iii.

unprotected, became a prey to the most powerful, who amassed fortunes, by either seizing their property or by selling their persons into foreign countries. . . .

The English at this time wore short garments reaching to the knee; they had their hair cropped, their beards shaven, their arms laden with golden bracelets, and their skin adorned with tattooed designs. They were accustomed to eat till they became surfeited, and to drink till they were sick. These latter customs they imparted to their conquerors; as to the rest, they adopted the manners of the Normans. I would not, however, have these bad propensities universally ascribed to the English. I know that many of the clergy trod the path of sanctity by a blameless life; I know that many of the laity, of all ranks and conditions, were well-pleasing to God. Injustice is far from my design; my accusation does not involve the whole people indiscriminately. . . .

The Normans were at this time, and are even now, proudly appareled and finical in their food, but not great eaters. They are a people inured to war, and can hardly live without it; fierce in rushing against the enemy, and, where force fails to succeed, ready to use stratagems or to corrupt by bribery. They live in large edifices with economy; envy their superiors, wish to excel their equals, and plunder their subjects, though they defend them from others; they are faithful to their lords, but a slight offense renders them perfidious. They weigh treachery by its chance of success, and change their sentiments for money. They are, however, the most hospitable of people, and esteem strangers worthy of equal honor with themselves. They also intermarry with their vassals. The Normans revived, by their arrival, the observances of religion, which had everywhere grown lifeless in England. You might see churches rise in every village, and monasteries in the towns and cities, built after a style unknown before; you might behold the country flourishing with renovated rites; so that each wealthy man accounted that day lost to him which he had neglected to signalize by some worthy act.

42. William's Character [1]

Above all, he was humble to the servants of God, affable to the obedient and inexorable to the rebellious. He attended the offices of the Christian religion, as much as a layman was able to do; so that he was present at daily mass and heard vespers and matins. He built one monastery in England and another in Normandy. . . . No sinister means profited a bishop in those days; nor could an abbot procure advancement by purchase. He who had the best report for undeviating sanctity was most honored and most esteemed. William built another monastery near Hastings, dedicated to St. Martin. It was also called Battle Abbey, because there the principal church stands on the very spot, where, as they report, Harold was found in the thickest heaps of the slain.

King William kindly admitted foreigners to his friendship, bestowed honors on them without distinction, and was attentive to almsgiving. He also gave many possessions in England to foreign churches, and scarcely did his own munificence, or that of his nobility, leave any monastery unnoticed, more especially in Normandy. . . . Thus, in his time the monastic flock increased on every side and monasteries arose, ancient in their rule but modern in building. . . .

The king was of just stature, of extraordinary corpulence, and of fierce countenance. His forehead was bare of hair. He was of such great strength of arm that it was often matter of surprise that no one was able to draw his bow, which he himself could bend when his horse was at full gallop. He was majestic, whether sitting or standing; of excellent health, so that he was never confined with any dangerous disorder, except at the last; and passionately devoted to the pleasures of the chase. . . . He gave sumptuous and splendid entertainments at the principal festivals; passing Christmas at Gloucester, Easter at Winchester, and Pentecost at Westminster. At these times a royal edict summoned thither all the principal persons of every order,

[1] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, bk. iii.

that the ambassadors from foreign nations might admire the splendor of the assemblage and the costliness of the banquets. Nor was he at any time more affable or indulgent; in order that his guests might proclaim universally how his generosity kept pace with his riches. . . .

His anxiety for money is the only thing for which he can deservedly be blamed. Money he sought all opportunities of scraping together, he cared not how; he would say and do almost anything, where the hope of money allured him. I have here no excuse whatever to offer, unless it be, as some one has said, that "Of necessity, he must fear many, whom many fear." For, through dread of his enemies, he used to drain the country of money, with which he might retard or repel their attacks; very often, where strength failed, purchasing the forbearance of his enemies with gold.

43. Death of William [1]

In the month of August, 1087, when the corn was ripe on the ground, the clusters on the vines, and the orchards laden with fruit in full abundance, he collected an army and entered France in a hostile manner, trampling down and laying everything waste. . . . At last he set fire to the city of Maintes, where the church of St. Mary was burnt, together with a recluse who did not think it justifiable to quit her cell even under such an emergency; and the whole property of the citizens was destroyed. Exhilarated by this success, while furiously commanding his people to add fuel to the conflagration, he approached too near the flames, and contracted a disorder from the violence of the fire and the intenseness of the autumnal heat. Some say that his horse, leaping over a dangerous ditch, inflicted on him an internal injury. William sounded a retreat and returned to Rouen. As the malady increased, he took to his bed. His physicians, when consulted, affirmed that death was inevitable. On hearing this, he filled the house with his

[1] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, bk. iii.

lamentation, because death had suddenly seized him before he could effect that reformation of his life which he had long meditated.

Recovering his fortitude, however, William performed the duties of a Christian in confession and received the communion. Reluctantly, and by compulsion, he bestowed Normandy on his son Robert; to William he gave England; while Henry obtained his maternal possessions. He ordered all his prisoners to be released and pardoned, and his treasures to be brought forth and distributed to the churches. He also gave a certain sum of money to repair the church which had been burnt. Thus rightly ordering all things, he departed this life on the sixth of September, in the fifty-ninth year of his age. . . .

His body, embalmed after royal custom, was brought down the river Seine to Caen, and there consigned to the earth. A large number of the clergy attended the funeral, but few of the laity were present. Here might be seen the wretchedness of earthly vicissitude; for the man who was formerly the glory of all Europe, and more powerful than any of his predecessors, could not find a place of everlasting rest, without contention. A certain knight, to whose patrimony the place pertained, loudly exclaiming at the robbery, forbade the burial. He said that the ground belonged to himself by inheritance; and that the king had no claim to rest in a place which he had forcibly invaded. Whereupon, at the desire of Henry, the only one of his sons who was present, a hundred pounds of silver were paid to settle this audacious claim.

CHAPTER X

MONASTIC LIFE IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY[1]

A LITTLE book in Latin, written by an inmate of the Benedictine monastery of St. Edmundsbury, presents a vivid picture of monastic life in medieval England. Of Jocelin, the author, we know almost nothing, except that he held several minor offices in the monastery and thus came into intimate relations with Samson, its abbot. Samson is the central figure and, so to speak, the hero of Jocelin's story. "I have undertaken," he declares in his preface, "to write of those things which I have seen and heard . . . and I have related the evil as a warning and the good for an example."

44. The Choice of an Abbot[2]

The abbacy being vacant, we often made supplication unto the Lord and to the blessed martyr, Edmund, that they would give us and our church a fit pastor. Three times in each week did we prostrate ourselves in the choir and sing seven penitential psalms. And there were some who would not have been so earnest in their prayers, if they had known who was to become abbot. As to the choice of an abbot, if the king[3] should grant us free election, there was much difference of opinion, some of it openly expressed, some of it privately; and every man had his own ideas.

One said of a certain brother, "He, that brother, is a good

[1] *The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond, Monk of St. Edmundsbury*, translated by L. C. Jane. London, 1907. Chatto and Windus.

[2] *Cronica Jocelini de Brakelonda*, pp. 16–20.

[3] Henry II, 1154–1189.

monk, a likely person. He knows much of St. Benedict's Rule and of the customs of the Church. It is true that he is not so profoundly wise as are some others, but he is quite capable of being abbot. Abbot Ording was illiterate, and yet he was a good abbot and ruled this house wisely; and one reads in the fable that the frogs did better to elect a log to be their king than a serpent, who devoured his subjects." Another answered, "How could this thing be? How could one who does not know letters preach in the chapter, or to the people on feast days? How could one who does not know the Scriptures have the knowledge of binding and loosing? For the rule of souls is the art of arts, the highest form of knowledge. God forbid that a dumb idol be set up in the church of St. Edmund, where many men are to be found who are learned and industrious."

Again, one said of another, "That brother is a literate man, eloquent and prudent, and strict in his observance of the Rule. He loves the monastery greatly and has suffered many ills for the good of the Church. He is worthy to be made abbot." Another answered, "From good clerks deliver us, O Lord!"

And again, one said of another, "That brother is a good husbandman; this is proved by the state of his office, and from the positions in which he has served, and from the buildings and repairs which he has effected. He is well able to work and to defend the House, and he is something of a scholar, though too much learning has not made him mad. He is worthy of the abbacy." Another answered, "God forbid that a man who can neither read nor sing nor celebrate the holy office, a man who is dishonest and unjust, and who treats poor men in evil fashion, should be made abbot."

Again, one said of another, "That brother is a kindly man, friendly and amiable, peaceful and calm, generous and liberal, a learned and eloquent man, and proper enough in face and gait. He is beloved of many within and without the walls, and such a one might become abbot to the great honor of the Church, if God wills." Another answered, "It is no credit, but

rather a disgrace, for a man to be too particular as to what he eats and drinks, to think it a virtue to sleep much, to know well how to spend and to know little how to gain, to snore while others keep vigil, to wish ever to have abundance, and not to trouble when debts daily increase, or when money spent brings no return; to be one who hates anxiety and toil, caring nothing while one day passes and another dawns; to be one who loves and cherishes flatterers and liars; to be one man in word and another in deed. From such a prelate the Lord deliver us!"

And again, one said of his friend, "That man is almost wiser than all of us, both in secular and in ecclesiastical matters. He is a man skilled in counsel, strict in the Rule, learned and eloquent, and noble in stature; such a prelate would become our Church." Another answered, "That would be true, if he were a man of good and approved repute. But his character has been questioned, perhaps falsely, perhaps rightly. And though the man is wise, humble in the chapter, devoted to the singing of psalms, strict in his conduct in the cloister while he is a cloistered monk, this is only from force of habit. For if he have authority in any office, he is too scornful, holding monks of no account, and being on familar terms with secular men, and if he be angry, he will scarce say a word willingly to any brother, even in answer to a question."

I heard in truth another brother abused by some because he had an impediment in his speech, and it was said of him that he had pastry in his mouth when he should have spoken. I myself said that I would not consent that anyone should be made abbot unless he understood something of logic, and knew how to distinguish the true from the false. One, moreover, who was wise in his own eyes, said, "May Almighty God give us a foolish and stupid pastor, that he may be driven to use our help." And I heard, forsooth, that one monk, who was industrious, learned, and preëminent for his high birth, was abused by some of the older men because he was a novice. The novices said of their elders that they were invalid old men and little

capable of ruling an abbey. And so many men said many things, and every man was fully persuaded in his own mind.

45. Samson Elected Abbot [1]

After much discussion a deputation of monks, led by the cellarer, Dennis, proceeded to the king's court and presented their nominations to the abbacy. The choice had narrowed down to two men, either the prior or the subsacristan, Samson.

Dennis, speaking as one for all, began to commend the persons of the prior and Samson. He said that they were both learned men, both good, both praiseworthy in their lives and of unblemished reputation. But ever at the climax of his speech he put forward Samson, multiplying words in his praise, saying that he was a man strict in his conduct, stern in correcting faults, apt for labor, prudent in temporal matters, and experienced in various positions.

Then the bishop of Winchester answered, "We know well what you would say; from your words we gather that your prior has appeared to you to be somewhat slack, and that you wish to have him who is called Samson." Dennis answered, "Both of them are good men, but we desire to have the better, if God wills." Thereupon the bishop said, "Of two good things, the greater good should be selected. Say openly, do you desire to have Samson?" And many, and they a majority, answered plainly, "We wish to have Samson," and none spoke against him. Some, however, were silent from caution, wishing to offend neither candidate.

Then Samson was nominated in the presence of the king, and when the king had consulted with his men for a while, all were summoned before him. And the king said, "You have presented to me Samson. I know him not. If you had presented your prior to me, I would have accepted him, for I have known him. But I will only do what you will. Take heed to yourselves; by the true eyes of God, if you do ill, I will exact a recompense at your hands."

[1] *Cronica Jocelini de Brakelonda*, pp. 34–36.

Then he asked the prior if he assented to the choice and wished it, and the prior answered that he did wish it and that Samson was worthy of much greater honor. Therefore Samson was elected, and fell at the king's feet and embraced them. Then he arose quickly and hastened to the altar, with his head erect and without changing his expression, chanting the *Miserere mei, Deus* with the brothers.

And when the king saw this, he said to those that stood by, "By the eyes of God, this man thinks that he is worthy to rule the abbey."

46. Samson's Rule of the Monastery [1]

In those days I was prior's chaplain, and within four months was made chaplain to the abbot. And I noted many things and committed them to memory. So, on the morrow of his feast, the abbot assembled the prior and some few others together, as if to seek advice from others, but he himself knew what he would do.

He said that a new seal must be made and adorned with an effigy of himself, though his predecessors had not had such a seal. For a time, however, he used the seal of our prior, writing at the end of all letters that he did so for the time being because he had no seal of his own. And afterwards he ordered his household, and transferred various officials to other posts, saying that he proposed to maintain twenty-six horses in his court, and many times he declared that "a child must first crawl, and afterwards he may stand upright and walk." And he laid this special command upon his servants, that they should take care that he might not be laid open to the charge of not providing enough food and drink, but that they should assiduously provide for the maintenance of the hospitality of the abbey.

In these matters, and in all the things which he did and determined, he trusted fully in the help of God and his own good sense, holding it to be shameful to rely upon the counsel

[1] *Cronica Jocelini de Brakelonda*, pp. 40–41.

of another and thinking he was sufficient unto himself. The monks marveled and the knights were angered; they blamed his pride, and often defamed him at the court of the king, saying that he would not act in accordance with the advice of his freemen. He himself put away from his privy council all the great men of the abbey, both lay and literate, men without whose advice and assistance it seemed impossible that the abbey could be ruled. For this reason Ranulf de Glanvill, justiciar of England, was at first offended with him and was less well-disposed toward him than was expedient, until he knew well from definite proofs that the abbot acted providently and prudently, both in domestic and in external affairs.

47. Complaints against Samson's Rule [1]

Many of Samson's adversaries raised objections to his rule of the monastery. They said that he received what he would from the sacristry, and spared his own money, and allowed his wheat to lie in the barns until such time as the price should be high. They said that he managed his manors in a way different from that of his predecessors. They also complained that he burdened his cellarer with guests who should rather have been received by the abbot, so that the abbot might win repute as a wise man and one who was clever and provident at the end of the year, but the monastery and its officials be thought ignorant and wasteful.

To these charges I used to answer that if he took anything from the sacristry, he employed it for the use of the Church; and that no envious persons could deny this. And, to speak the truth, more good and much greater good was done with the offerings of the sacristry during the fifteen years after Samson's election than in the forty years preceding.

To the others who objected that the abbot went often to his manors, I was wont to answer and to excuse him by saying that the abbot was happier and in better spirits anywhere

[1] *Cronica Jocelini de Brakelonda*, pp. 54–57.

than at home. This also was the truth, whether on account of the constant complaints which came to him, or on account of those who told him rumors concerning himself. Accordingly, it often happened that his appearance was stern, and that consequently he lost much favor and grace with the guests, though he satisfied them with food and drink. . . .

On one occasion I said to him, "Lord, I heard you this night keeping watch after matins and breathing heavily, contrary to your wont." And he answered, "It is not strange. You share my good things, food, little of the toil of providing for the house and household, of the many and arduous labors which are a pastor's care. These make me anxious and cause me to groan and to be troubled in spirit." Thereupon I raised my hands to heaven and answered, "From such great anxiety, almighty and merciful Lord, deliver me!"

I heard the abbot say that if he were in that condition in which he had been before he became a monk, and had a small income wherewith he might support himself in the schools, he would never become either monk or abbot. And on another occasion, he said that had he known beforehand what care there was, he would far rather have been almoner or librarian than abbot and lord. And he declared that he had ever longed for the post of librarian above all others. Yet who would believe such things? Not I; no, not I; but that as I lived with him day and night for six years, I know fully the merit of his life and the wisdom of his mind.

48. Appearance and Character of Abbot Samson [1]

He was below the average height, almost bald; his face was neither round nor oblong; his nose was prominent and his lips thick; his eyes were clear and his glance penetrating; his hearing was excellent; his eyebrows arched, and frequently shaved; and a little cold soon made him hoarse. . . . In his

[1] *Cronica Jocelini de Brakelonda*, pp. 62–65.

ruddy beard there were a few gray hairs, and still fewer in his black and curling hair. But in the course of the first fourteen years after his election, all his hair became white as snow.

He was an exceedingly temperate man; he possessed great energy and a strong constitution, and was fond both of riding and walking, until old age prevailed upon him and moderated his ardor in these respects. When he heard the news of the capture of the cross and the fall of Jerusalem,[1] he began to wear under-garments made of horse hair, and a horse-hair shirt, and gave up the use of meat. None the less, he willed that meat should be placed before him as he sat at table, that the alms might be increased. He ate sweet milk, honey, and similar sweet things far more readily than any other food.

He hated liars, drunkards, and talkative persons; for virtue ever loves itself and spurns that which is contrary to it. He blamed those who grumbled about their meat and drink, and especially monks who so grumbled, and personally kept to the same manners which he had observed when he was a cloistered monk. Moreover, he had this virtue in himself that he never desired to change the dish which was placed before him. When I was a novice, I wished to prove whether this was really true, and as I happened to serve in the refectory, I thought to place before him food which would have offended any other man, in a very dirty and broken dish. But when he saw this, he was as if blind to it. Then, as there was some delay, I repented of what I had done and straightway seized the dish, changed the food and dish for better, and carried it to him. He, however, was angry at the change, and disturbed.

He was an eloquent man, speaking both French and Latin, but rather careful of the good sense of that which he had to say than of the style of his words. . . .

The abbot further appeared to prefer the active to the contemplative life, and praised good officials more than good monks.

[1] The capture of Jerusalem by Saladin occurred in 1187. This event led to the Third Crusade. See page 100.

He rarely commended anyone solely on account of his knowledge of letters, unless the man happened to have knowledge of secular affairs. If he chanced to hear of any prelate who had given up his pastoral work and become a hermit, he did not praise him for this. He would not praise men who were too kindly, saying, "He who strives to please all men, deserves to please none."

CHAPTER XI

ST. FRANCIS AND THE FRANCISCANS[1]

THE sources for the life of St. Francis and for early Franciscan history are very numerous. In the first place, we possess some writings by St. Francis himself, including the Rule, or constitution, which he drew up for the guidance of his followers, the Will, which he prepared just before his death, and various poems, sermons, and letters. Then there are several biographies of St. Francis. These were written in the thirteenth century by his intimate companions. Still another source, semi-biographical in character, is called the *Little Flowers of St. Francis*. It is an enlarged Italian translation of a Latin original compiled in the thirteenth century. The names of both author and translator remain unknown. In spite of the fact that the *Little Flowers* includes much apocryphal matter, there is probably no other Franciscan work which presents so well the simplicity, purity, and loftiness of thought characteristic of the saint and his disciples.

49. Conversion of Friar Bernard[2]

The first companion of St. Francis was Friar Bernard of Assisi, who was converted in this manner: St. Francis, while yet in the secular habit, although he had already renounced the world and went about being wholly held in scorn of men, mortifying his flesh by penances, so that by many he was thought

[1] *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, translated by T. W. Arnold. London, 1898. J. M. Dent and Sons.

[2] *Fioretti di San Francesco*, ch. ii.

foolish and was mocked at as a mad fellow and was driven away with stones and foul abuse by his kinsfolk and by strangers, nevertheless bore himself patiently amid all manner of ignominy and reproach, as though he were deaf and dumb. Now Bernard of Assisi, who was one of the noblest and richest and wisest in the city, began to take heed unto St. Francis, how exceeding strong his contempt of the world, how great his patience in the midst of wrongs, so that although for a two years' space thus hated and despised by all men he ever seemed the more constant. Then Bernard began to ponder and to say within himself, "This brother hath abundant grace from God"; so he invited him one evening to sup and lodge with him; and St. Francis consented thereto and supped with him and lodged.

And thereat Bernard set it in his heart to watch his sanctity; wherefore he had made ready for him a bed in his own proper chamber, in which at night time a lamp ever burned. And St. Francis, to hide his sanctity, when he came into the chamber threw himself immediately upon the bed and made as though he slept; and likewise Bernard after some short space set himself to lie down and fell to snoring loudly, as one wrapped in deepest slumber. Wherefore St. Francis, thinking truly that Bernard was asleep, rose from his bed and set himself to pray, lifting up his hands and eyes unto heaven, and with exceeding great devotion and fervor said, "My God, my God." And thus he abode till morning, always repeating, "My God, my God," and naught beside; and this St. Francis said, while musing on and marveling at the excellence of the Divine Majesty, which deigned to stoop down to a perishing world and through his little poor one, St. Francis, purposed to bring a remedy for the salvation of his soul and the souls of others. . . .

Bernard seeing, by the light of the lamp, the most pious acts of St. Francis, and devoutly pondering in his mind the words that he spoke, was touched and inspired by the Holy Spirit to change his life. In the morning, therefore, he called St. Francis and said to him, "Friar Francis, I am wholly purposed in my heart to leave the world and follow thee in

whatsoever thou mayest bid me." Hearing this, St. Francis rejoiced in spirit and said, "Bernard, this that thou sayest is a task so great and difficult that we must seek counsel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and beseech Him that He be pleased to show us His will therein and teach us how we may bring it of pass. Therefore let us go to the bishop's house, wherein is a good priest, and let us hear the mass said; then let us continue in prayer until tierce,[1] beseeching God that in thrice opening of the missal He may reveal to us the path it is His will we should elect." Bernard made answer that this pleased him right well.

So they fared forth and came to the bishop's house: and after they had heard the mass and continued praying until tierce, the priest at the bidding of St. Francis took the missal, and making the sign of holy cross, opened it thrice in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the first opening appeared the words that Christ spoke in the Gospel to the young man who asked concerning the path of perfection: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor and follow me." At the second opening appeared those words that Christ spoke unto the Apostles when He sent them forth to preach: "Take nothing for your journey, neither staves nor scrip, neither shoes nor money." . . . At the third opening of the missal appeared those words that Christ spoke: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Then spoke St. Francis unto Bernard, "Behold the counsel that Christ giveth us; come then and fulfill that which thou hast heard; and blessed be our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath deigned to show forth His own life in the holy Gospel." Then Bernard went out and sold all that he had, and he was very rich; and with great joy he gave all his possessions to widows, to orphans, to prisoners, to monasteries, to hospices, and to pilgrims; and in all things St. Francis helped him faithfully and wisely. . . .

[1] The third of the canonical hours, or nine A.M.

Bernard had such divine grace that oftentimes in contemplation he was caught up to God; and St. Francis said of him that he was worthy of all reverence, and that it was he that had founded this Order; inasmuch as he was the first to leave the world, keeping back naught for himself, but giving all unto the poor of Christ, and, when he took on him the Gospel poverty, offering himself naked in the arms of the Crucified, to whom be all praise and glory, world without end. Amen.

50. Friar Bernard in Bologna [1]

Seeing that St. Francis and his companions were called of God to bear the cross of Christ in their hearts and in their deeds, and to preach it with their tongues, they seemed to be and in truth were crucified, as far as regards their dress, the austerity of their lives, and their works. Therefore they desired the more to suffer shame and contumely for the love of Christ, rather than honor of the world and reverence and praise of men. In insults they rejoiced and at honors they grew sad; and so they passed through the world as strangers and pilgrims, bearing with them naught save Christ crucified. And since they were true branches of the true vine, that is, Christ, they brought forth great and good fruit in the souls they won for God.

It happened in the beginning of the Order that St. Francis sent Friar Bernard to Bologna to the end that he might there, according to the grace that God had given him, bring forth fruit to God; and Friar Bernard, making the sign of the most holy cross, departed and came unto Bologna. And when the children saw him in poor and threadbare dress, they made much mock of him, as though he were a fool; but Friar Bernard with patience and with joy bore all things for the love of Christ; nay, of set purpose that he might be the more derided, betook himself to the market place of the city. While sitting there, many children and men came about him. Some plucked at

[1] *Fioretti di San Francesco*, ch. v.

his hood; some pelted him with dust and some with stones; and some pushed him this way and others that. But Friar Bernard, continuing always with the same patience, neither complained nor changed at all, and for the space of many days returned to the same place, to suffer the same usage. And since patience is a work of perfection and proof of virtue, a learned doctor of the law, beholding and musing on the great constancy and virtue of Friar Bernard, how for so many days neither taunt nor contumely could disquiet him, said to himself, "Of a surety this needs must be a holy man." Approaching him, he asked, "Who are thou? and wherefore art thou come hither?"

Friar Bernard for reply put his hand into his bosom and drew forth the Rule of St. Francis, and gave it to him to read, and when he had read it, musing on its most lofty state of perfection, he turned unto his companions and said, "Of a truth this is the highest state of religion whereof I have ever heard. This man and his companions are the holiest men in this world, and whoso does him wrong committeth a most grievous sin; most highly should we honor him, seeing that he is a true friend of God." And he said to Friar Bernard, "If it is your wish to found a friary, wherein you may serve God conveniently, with right good will, for the salvation of my soul, will I give it you." Friar Bernard replied, "Master, methinks our Lord Jesus Christ hath put this thought within your heart; and therefore for the honor of Christ I willingly accept your proffered gift." Then with great joy and love the said judge took Friar Bernard to his home; and gave him the promised friary and made it all ready and furnished it at his own expense. From that time forth he became the special protector of Friar Bernard and his companions.

Friar Bernard through his holy life began to be much honored of the people, in such sort that whoso might touch and see him deemed himself blessed thereby; but he, like a true disciple of Christ and the humble St. Francis, fearing that the honor of the world might hinder the peace and salvation of his soul,

on a day departed and returned unto St. Francis and spoke thus unto him, "Father, the friary is founded in the city of Bologna; send brothers thither to maintain it and abide in it; since I have no more profit therein, nay, rather for the too great honor done to me I fear that I have lost even more than I have gained." St. Francis, learning all things in order, how God had worked through Friar Bernard, gave thanks to God, who thus was beginning to enlarge the poor little disciples of the cross; and then he sent some of his companions to Bologna and the parts of Lombardy, who founded many friaries in various places.

51. Humility of St. Francis [1]

Once when St. Francis abode in the friary of Portiuncula with Friar Masseo of Marignano, a man of much sanctity, discretion, and grave in speaking of God, he was returning one day from prayer in the wood, and being at the entrance to the wood, Friar Masseo desired to make proof of his humility and . . . said to him, "Why after thee? why after thee? why after thee?" And St. Francis replied, "What is this thou wouldest say?" Said Friar Masseo, "I say, why doth all the world come after thee, and why is it that all men long to see thee, and hear thee, and obey thee? Thou art not a man comely of form, thou art not of much wisdom, thou art not noble of birth; whence comes it then that it is after thee that the whole world doth run?"

Hearing this St. Francis, all overjoyed in spirit, lifting up his face unto heaven, stood for a great while with his mind uplifted in God. And then . . . he turned to Friar Masseo and said, "Wilt thou know why after me? wilt thou know why after me that the whole world doth run? This cometh unto me from the eyes of the most high God, which behold at all time the evil and the good; for those most holy eyes have seen among sinners none more vile, none more lacking than I am to do this marvelous work which He purposeth to do. He

[1] *Fioretti di San Francesco*, ch. x.

hath not found upon the earth a creature more vile, and therefore hath He chosen me to confound the nobleness and the greatness and the strength and the beauty and wisdom of the world; to the intent that men may know that all virtue and all goodness come from Him, and not from the creature, and that no man may glory in himself; but may glory in the Lord, unto whom be honor forever and ever." Then Friar Masseo, at so humble a reply uttered with such great fervor, knew of a surety that St. Francis was rooted and grounded in humility.

52. The Praise of Poverty [1]

That wonderful servant and follower of Christ, St. Francis, to the end that he might in all things conform himself perfectly unto Christ, who sent his disciples forth by two and two unto all the cities and places where He was himself purposing to go; seeing that after the pattern of Christ he had gathered together twelve companions, sent them forth by two and two to preach throughout the world. And to give them an example of true obedience, he was himself the first to go, after the pattern of Christ who began to do before he taught. Having allotted to his companions the other parts of the world, he with Friar Masseo as his companion took the road that led to the land of France.

Coming one day to a town sore hungered, they went, according to the Rule, begging their bread for the love of God; and St. Francis went by one street, and Friar Masseo by another. But because St. Francis was mean to look upon and small of stature, and was deemed thereby a vile beggar by whoso knew him not, he got by his begging naught save a few mouthfuls and scraps of dry bread; but to Friar Masseo, because he was tall and fair of form, were given large pieces of fresh bread. When they had done their begging, they met together to eat in a place outside the city, where was a fair fountain and near it a fine, broad stone; upon which each one set the alms that he had begged.

[1] *Fioretti di San Francesco*, ch. xiii.

St. Francis, seeing that Friar Masseo's pieces of bread were finer and larger than his own, rejoiced with great joy, and said, "O Friar Masseo, we are not worthy of such vast treasure." When he repeated many times these words, Friar Masseo made answer, "Father, how can one speak of treasure where is such poverty and lack of all things whereof there is need? Here is neither cloth, nor knife, nor plate, nor porringer, nor house, nor table, nor man-servant, nor maid-servant." Then said St. Francis, "And this it is that I account vast treasure, wherein is nothing at all prepared by human hands, but whatever we have is given by God's own providence, as manifestly doth appear in the bread that we have begged, in the table of stone so fine, and in the fountain so clear; wherefore I will that we pray unto God that He make us love with all our heart the treasure of holy poverty, which is so noble that thereunto did God Himself become a servitor."

53. St. Francis Preaches to the Birds [1]

As with great fervor he was going on the way, he lifted up his eyes and beheld some trees near the road, on which sat a great company of birds. St. Francis marveled at this and said to his companions, "Ye shall wait for me here upon the way and I will go to preach unto my little sisters, the birds." And he went to the field and began to preach unto the birds that were on the ground; and immediately those that were on the trees flew down to him, and all of them remained still and quiet together, until St. Francis made an end of preaching; and not even then did they depart, until he had given them his blessing. . . .

The sermon that St. Francis preached unto them was after this fashion: "My little sisters, the birds, beholden are ye unto God, your Creator, and always in every place ought ye to praise Him, because He hath given you liberty to fly about everywhere, and hath also given you double and triple raiment; moreover,

[1] *Fioretti di San Francesco*, ch. xvi.

He preserved your seed in the ark of Noah, that your race might not perish out of the world; still more are ye beholden to Him for the element of the air which He hath appointed for you; beyond all this, ye sow not, neither do you reap; and God feedeth you, and giveth you the streams and fountains for your drink; the mountains and the valleys for your refuge and the high trees whereon to make your nests; and because ye know not how to spin or sew, God clotheth you; wherefore your Creator loveth you much, seeing that He hath bestowed on you so many benefits; and therefore, my little sisters, beware of the sin of ingratitude and study always to give praises unto God."

When St. Francis spoke these words to them, the birds began to open their beaks, and stretch their necks, and spread their wings, and reverently bend their heads down to the ground, and by their acts and by their songs to show that the holy friar gave them joy exceeding great. And St. Francis rejoiced with them, and was glad, and marveled much at so great a company of birds and their most beautiful diversity and their good heed and sweet friendliness, for which things he devoutly praised their Creator in them.

CHAPTER XII

RICHARD THE LION-HEARTED AND THE THIRD CRUSADE [1]

MANY European chroniclers, English, French, and German, have described the Third Crusade and have related the exploits of its principal hero, Richard the Lion-hearted. One of the most important accounts is the *Itinerary of King Richard.* It is believed to have been composed by a certain Richard de Templo, canon of Holy Trinity Church, London. The author of the *Itinerary* declares that the notes for his book were drawn up amid the din of battles and the stir of martial camps. The work professes, therefore, to be a narrative by an eye-witness to the things mentioned in it. This statement must be received with caution, for Richard de Templo appears to have borrowed heavily from an Anglo-Norman poem dealing with the deeds of the English king in the Holy Land.

54. Personality of Richard [2]

He had the courage of Hector, the magnanimity of Achilles, and was equal to Alexander and not inferior to Roland [3] in valor; nay, he outshone many illustrious characters of our own times. The liberality of a Titus [4] was his, and, which is so rarely found in a soldier, he was gifted with the eloquence of Nestor and the prudence of Ulysses; and he showed himself preëminent in the conclusion and transaction of business, as

[1] *Chronicles of the Crusades.* London, 1848. George Bell and Sons.
[2] *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi,* bk. ii, ch. 5.
[3] See page 160.
[4] Roman emperor, 79–81 A.D.

one whose knowledge was not without active goodwill to aid it, nor his goodwill wanting in knowledge. Who, if Richard were accused of presumption, could not readily excuse him, knowing him for a man who never acknowledged defeat, impatient of an injury, and impelled irresistibly to vindicate his rights, though all he did was characterized by innate nobleness of mind. Success made him better fitted for action; fortune ever favors the bold, and though she works her pleasure on whom she will, Richard was never overwhelmed with adversity. He was tall of stature and graceful in figure; his hair between red and auburn; his limbs were straight and flexible; his arms rather long, and not to be matched for wielding the sword or for striking with it; and his long legs suited the rest of his frame; while his appearance was commanding, and his manners and habits suitable; and he gained the greatest celebrity, not more from his high birth than from the virtues that adorned him. But why need we take much labor in extolling the fame of so great a man?

55. Capture of Acre [1]

The Third Crusade (1189–1192) was a joint undertaking on the part of the three most powerful states of Europe — Germany, France, and England. The German contingent, under Frederick Barbarossa, followed a land route through the territories of the Roman Empire in the East and reached southern Asia Minor. Here Frederick perished by accident; and of all his fine army scarcely a thousand men succeeded in joining the other crusaders before Acre. The siege of this important city was conducted by the Anglo-French contingent under Richard the Lion-hearted and Philip Augustus.

By the conjunction of the retinues of the two kings, an immense army of Christians was formed . . . . There was not a man of influence or renown in France who came not, then or afterwards, to the siege of Acre. And when King Richard arrived with an army, the flower of war, and learned that the king of France had gained the goodwill and favor of all, by

[1] *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi,* bk. iii, chs. 4, 19.

giving to each of his soldiers three *aurei* a month, not to be outdone or equaled in generosity, he proclaimed by mouth of herald that whosoever was in his service, no matter of what nation, should receive four *aurei* a month for his pay. By these means his generosity was extolled by all, for he outshone every one else in merit and favors, as he outdid them in gifts and magnificence. "When," exclaimed they, "will the first attack take place, by a man whom we have expected so long and anxiously? A man, the first of kings, and the most skilled in war throughout Christendom? Now let the will of God be done, for the hope of all rests on King Richard."

After a two years' siege Acre surrendered to the crusaders in 1191.

From the day on which the Saracens first got possession of the city of Acre, to that on which it was restored, was a space of four years. . . . The state of the churches within the city was not beheld without horror, and it is not without grief that we relate the unseemly things that had been perpetrated within them. For who could behold, without tears, the countenances of the holy images of the crucifixion of the Son of God, and of many saints, defiled or disfigured in one way or another? Who would not shudder at the horrible sight of altars overthrown, and of crucifixes cast to the earth and beaten in contempt by that insulting and impious nation, the Saracens, and their own rites exhibited in holy places? All the relics of man's redemption and the Christian religion had been effaced, and the corruption of the Mohammedan superstition had been introduced.

56. Richard's Deeds in the Holy Land [1]

Philip soon returned to France, but Richard stayed in the Holy Land for another year. During this time he had much hard fighting and met many thrilling adventures.

The sultan Saladin, hearing that his choice troops, in whom he had placed so much confidence, were being defeated by the

[1] *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi*, bk. iv, chs. 22, 28, 30; bk. v, ch. 54; bk. vi, ch. 28.

Christians, was filled with anger. Calling together his commanders, he said to them, "Are these the deeds of my brave troops, whom I have loaded with gifts? Lo! the Christians traverse the whole country at their pleasure, for there is no one to oppose them. Where now are all your boasts, those swords and spears with which you threatened to do such execution? Where is that prowess which you promised to put forth against the Christians, to overthrow them utterly? You have fought the battle which you desired, but where is the victory you promised? You have degenerated from your noble ancestors, who performed such exploits against the Christians and whose memory will endure forever." . . .

The commanders held down their heads at these words; but one of them returned this answer, "Most sacred sultan, this charge is unjust, for we fought with all our strength against the Franks and did our best to destroy them. We met their fiercest attacks, but it was of no avail; they are armed in impenetrable armor which no weapon can pierce, so that all our blows fell as it were upon a rock of flint. And, further, there is one among their number superior to any man we have ever seen. He always charges before the rest, slaying and destroying our men. He is the first in every enterprise, and is a most brave and excellent soldier; no one can resist him or escape out of his hands: they call him Melech Ric.[1] Such a king as he seems born to command the whole earth; what more then could we do against so formidable an enemy?"

Richard on one occasion was very nearly captured by the Saracens.

King Richard once went out hawking with a small escort and intended, if he saw any small body of Saracens, to fall upon them. Fatigued with his ride, he fell asleep, and a force of Saracens rushed suddenly upon him to make him prisoner. The king, awakened by the noise, had hardly time to mount his horse, and his attendants were still getting on their horses also, when the enemy came upon them and tried to take him.

[1] King Richard.

King Richard, drawing his sword, rushed upon them, and they, pretending flight, drew him after them to a place where there was another body of Saracens in ambush. These started up with speed and surrounded the king to make him prisoner. Richard defended himself bravely, and the enemy drew back, though he would still have been captured if the Saracens had known who he was. But in the midst of the conflict one of his companions, William de Pratelles, called out in the Saracenic language that he was the "melech," that is, the king; and the Saracens, believing what he said, led him off captive to their own army. . . .

At the news of this action our men were alarmed, and seizing their arms, came at full gallop to find the king. When they met him returning safe, he faced about and with them pursued the Saracens, who had carried off William de Pratelles, thinking they had got Richard himself. They could not, however, overtake the fugitives, and Richard then returned to the camp, to the great joy of his soldiers, who thanked God for his preservation but grieved for William de Pratelles, who loyally redeemed the king at the price of his own liberty. Some of Richard's friends now reproved him for his temerity, and begged him not to wander abroad alone and expose himself to be taken by the ambuscades of the Saracens, who were especially eager to make him prisoner; but on all occasions to take with him some brave soldiers and not to trust to his own strength against such numbers. But, notwithstanding these admonitions on the part of his best friends, the king's nature still broke out. In all expeditions he was the first to advance and the last to retreat, and he never failed, either by his own valor or the divine aid, to bring back numbers of captives, or, if they resisted, to put them to the sword.

On another occasion Richard gained a great victory over vastly superior numbers of the foe.

The conflict was raging fiercely when the king came up, and as his retinue was very small, some of his men said to him,

"My lord, we do not think it prudent or possible, with our small body, to resist this great multitude, nor shall we be able to save our men who are fighting with the Saracens. It is better to let them perish than to expose your person and all Christendom to certain danger, while we have the power of escaping." Richard changed color with indignation at these words. "What!" said he, "if I neglect to aid my men whom I sent forward with a promise to follow them, I shall never again deserve to be called a king." He said no more, but, spurring his horse, dashed into the midst of the Saracens, overthrowing them on both sides of him, and brandishing his sword, carved his way to and fro among the thickest ranks, slaying and maiming every one he came near. . . . In short, the enemy were put to the sword or took to flight, and our men returned with several prisoners to the camp. The same day three Saracens, from fear of death, perhaps, embraced Christianity and submitted to King Richard.

The discovery of a piece of the True Cross — most sacred of all relics in the eyes of the crusaders — is thus described.

It happened, on the third day before the feast of St. John the Baptist, that the Christians were much comforted by news which was brought to King Richard. A devout man, the abbot of St. Elie, whose countenance bespoke holiness, came to the king and told him that a long time ago he had concealed a piece of the True Cross, in order to preserve it, until the Holy Land should be rescued from the infidels and restored entirely to its former state. He said further that he alone knew of this hidden treasure, and that Saladin had tried in vain to make him reveal its whereabouts. On account of his contumacy, Saladin had ordered him to be bound; but he persisted in asserting that he had lost the piece of the Cross during the taking of Jerusalem; and had thus deluded Saladin, notwithstanding the latter's anxiety to find it. The king, hearing this, set out immediately, with the abbot and a great number of people, to the place of which the abbot had spoken; and having taken up the piece of the True Cross with humble veneration, they

returned to the army; and together with the people they kissed it with much piety and contrition.

In 1192 Richard came to terms with Saladin and quitted the Holy Land, never to return.

The king . . . sent ambassadors to Saladin, announcing to him, in the presence of many of his chiefs, that he asked for a truce of three years for the purpose of revisiting his country and collecting more men and money, wherewith to return and rescue all the land of Jerusalem from his domination, if indeed Saladin should have the courage to face him in the field. To this Saladin replied, calling his own Holy Law and God Almighty to witness, that he entertained such an exalted opinion of King Richard's honor, magnanimity, and general excellence, that he would rather lose his dominions to him than to any other king he had ever seen, always supposing that he was obliged to lose his dominions at all.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FOURTH CRUSADE AND THE CAPTURE OF CONSTANTINOPLE [1]

GEOFFROY de Villehardouin (about 1160–1213) was one of the organizers of the Fourth Crusade. He also took an active part in the capture of Constantinople and the founding of the short-lived Latin Empire. His *Conquest of Constantinople* possesses, accordingly, great historical value. It has also real literary merit, for Villehardouin wrote lucidly, methodically, and with a directness of style which doubtless expressed the author's strong and vigorous personality. The work ranks among the most important productions of medieval French literature.

57. First Preaching of the Crusade [2]

Be it known to you that eleven hundred and ninety-seven years after the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the time of Innocent III, pope of Rome, Philip II, king of France, and Richard I, king of England, there was in France a holy man named Fulk of Neuilly — which Neuilly is between Lagni-sur-Marne and Paris — and he was a priest in that village. And Fulk began to speak of God throughout the Isle of France, and the other regions round about; and you must know that by him the Lord wrought many miracles.

Be it known to you, further, that the fame of this holy man so spread that it reached the pope, Innocent III; and the pope sent to France, and ordered the right worthy man to preach

[1] *Memoirs of the Crusades by Villehardouin and De Joinville*, translated by Sir Frank Marzials. London, 1908. J. M. Dent and Sons.

[2] Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ch. i, secs. 1–2.

the cross by his authority. And afterwards the pope sent a cardinal of his, Master Peter of Capua, who himself had taken the cross, to proclaim the indulgence of which I now tell you, viz., that all who should take the cross and serve in the host for one year would be delivered from all the sins they had committed and would be acknowledged in confession. And because this indulgence was so great, the hearts of men were much moved, and many took the cross for the greatness of the pardon.

58. The Covenant with the Doge of Venice [1]

The crusaders, having assembled at Compiègne in France, sent six envoys, Villehardouin among them, to Venice, in order to make arrangements for their passage overseas. The doge of Venice at this time was Henry Dandolo, a very old man and blind.

When mass had been said, the doge desired the envoys to humbly ask the people to assent to the proposed covenant. The envoys came into the church. Curiously were they looked upon by many who had not before had sight of them.

Geoffroy de Villehardouin, the marshal of Champagne, by will and consent of the other envoys, acted as spokesman and said unto them, "Lords, the barons of France, most high and powerful, have sent us to you; and they cry to you for mercy, that you take pity on Jerusalem, which is in bondage to the Turks, and that, for God's sake, you help to avenge the shame of Christ Jesus. And for this end they have elected to come to you, because they know full well that there is no other people having so great power on the seas as you and your people. And they commanded us to fall at your feet, and not to rise till you consent to take pity on the Holy Land which is beyond the seas."

Then the six envoys knelt at the feet of the people, weeping many tears. And the doge and all the others burst into tears of pity and compassion, and cried with one voice, and lifted up their hands, saying, "We consent, we consent!" Then was

[1] Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ch. vi, secs. 26–30.

there so great a noise and tumult that it seemed as if the earth itself was falling to pieces.

And when this great tumult and passion of pity — greater did never any man see — were appeased, the good doge of Venice, who was very wise and valiant, went up into the reading-desk and spoke to the people and said to them, "Signors, behold the honor that God has done you; for the best people in the world have chosen you to join them in so high an enterprise as the deliverance of our Lord!"

All the good and beautiful words that the doge then spoke, I cannot repeat to you. But the end of the matter was that the covenants were to be made on the following day; and made they were, and devised accordingly. When they were concluded, it was notified to the council that we should go to Babylon,[1] because the Turks could better be destroyed in Babylon than in any other land; but to the folk at large it was only told that we were bound to go overseas. We were then in Lent (March, 1201), and by St. John's Day, in the following year — which would be twelve hundred and two years after the Incarnation of Jesus Christ — the barons and pilgrims were to be in Venice and the ships ready against their coming.

59. The Doge Assumes the Cross [2]

Then, on a Sunday, was assemblage held in the church of St. Mark. It was a very high festival, and the people of the land were there, as well as most of the barons and pilgrims.

Before the beginning of High Mass, the doge of Venice went up into the reading-desk and spoke to the people and said to them, "Signors, you are associated with the most worthy people in the world, and for the highest enterprise ever undertaken; and I am a man old and feeble, who should have need of rest, and I am sick in body; but I see that no one could command and lead you like myself, who am your lord. If you will

[1] By "Babylon" must be understood Cairo. It seems that Egypt, at this time the center of the Moslem power, was to be the first point of attack.

[2] Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ch. xiv, secs. 64–69.

consent that I take the sign of the cross to guard and direct you, and that my son remain in my place to guard the land, then shall I go to live or die with you and with the pilgrims."

And when they had heard him, they cried with one voice, "We pray you by God that you consent, and do it, and that you come with us!"

Very great was then the pity and compassion on the part of the people of the land and of the pilgrims; and many were the tears shed, because that worthy and good man would have had so much reason to remain behind, for he was an old man, and albeit his eyes were unclouded, yet he saw naught, having lost his sight through a wound in the head. He was of a great heart. . . .

Thus he came down from the reading-desk and went before the altar and knelt upon his knees, greatly weeping. And they sewed the cross upon a great cotton hat, which he wore in front, because he wished that all men should see it. And the Venetians began to take the cross in great numbers, a great multitude, for up to that day very few had taken the cross. Our pilgrims had much joy in the cross that the doge took, and were greatly moved, because of the wisdom and the valor that were in him.

Thus did the doge take the cross, as you have heard. Then the Venetians began to deliver the ships, the galleys, and the transports to the barons, for departure. . . .

60. The Crusaders before Constantinople [1]

But the crusaders were destined never to see Egypt and the Holy Land. Constantinople, not Cairo and Jerusalem, became their objective. According to Villehardouin's account, they were induced to change their plans because of the proposals made to them by Alexius, son of Isaac, the former eastern emperor. Alexius wished to secure their aid in restoring his father to the throne. In return for the services of the crusaders, Alexius promised to bring back the Greek Church into obedience to Rome, to pay them liberally, and to coöperate with

[1] Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ch. xxxi, secs. 154–157; chs. xxxv–xxxvii, secs. 171, 175, 177, 179–182.

them in future campaigns against the Moslems. The crusaders accepted these tempting offers and set sail for Constantinople to make war on the "Greeks." Their landing at the port of the city is vividly described.

The day was fixed on which the host should embark on the ships and transports to take the land by force, and either live or die. And be it known to you that the enterprise to be achieved was one of the most formidable ever attempted. Then did the bishops and clergy speak to the people, and tell them how they must confess, and make each one his testament, seeing that no one knew what might be the will of God concerning him. And this was done right willingly throughout the host and very piously.

The term fixed was now come; and the knights went on board the transports with their war-horses; and they were fully armed, with their helmets laced, and the horses covered with their housings, and saddled. All the other folk, who were of less consequence in battle, were on the great ships; and the galleys were fully armed and made ready.

The morning was fair after the rising of the sun; and the emperor Alexius[1] stood waiting for them on the other side, with great forces, and everything in order. The trumpets sounded and every galley took a transport in tow, so as to reach the other side more readily. None asked who should go first, but each made the land as soon as he could. The knights issued from the transports and leaped into the sea up to their waists, fully armed, with helmets laced, and lances in hand; and the good archers, and the good sergeants, and the good crossbowmen landed as soon as they touched ground.

The Greeks made a goodly show of resistance; but when it came to the lowering of the lances, they turned their backs, and went away flying, and abandoned the shore. And be it known to you that never was port more proudly taken. . . .

Having captured the port of Constantinople, the crusaders made ready to assault the city by land and sea.

[1] The usurper, Alexius III. He had deposed and imprisoned his brother Isaac.

First they planted two ladders at a barbican near the sea; and the wall was well defended by Englishmen and Danes;[1] and the attack was stiff and good and fierce. By main strength certain knights and two sergeants got up the ladders and made themselves masters of the wall; and at least fifteen got upon the wall, and fought there, hand to hand, with axes and swords, and those within redoubled their efforts and cast them out in very ugly sort, keeping two as prisoners. And those of our people who had been taken were led before the emperor Alexius; much was he pleased thereat. Thus did the assault leave matters on the side of the French. Many were wounded and many had their bones broken, so that the barons were very wroth.

Meanwhile the doge of Venice had not forgotten to do his share, but had ranged his ships and transports and vessels in line; and the Venetians began to draw near to the part of the shore that lay under the walls and the towers. Then might you have seen the mangonels[2] shooting from the ships and transports, and the crossbow bolts flying, and the bows letting fly their arrows deftly and well; and those within defending the walls and towers very fiercely; and the ladders on the ships coming so near that in many places swords and lances crossed; and the tumult and noise were so great that it seemed as if the very earth and sea were melting together. And be it known to you that the galleys did not dare to come to the shore.

Now may you hear of a strange deed of prowess; for the doge of Venice, who was an old man and saw naught, stood, fully armed, on the prow of his galley, and had the standard of St. Mark before him; and he cried to his people to put him on land, or else that he would do justice upon their bodies with his hands. And so they did, for the galley was run aground, and they leapt therefrom, and bore the standard of St. Mark before him on to the land.

And when the Venetians saw the standard of St. Mark on land, and the galley of their lord touching ground before them,

[1] Northmen in the service of the eastern emperor.

[2] Engines for hurling stones and javelins.

each one felt ashamed, and they all got to the land; and those in the transports leapt forth, and landed; and those in the big ships got into barges, and made for the shore, each and all as best they could. Then might you have seen an assault, great and marvelous; and to this bears witness Geoffroy de Villehardouin, who makes this book, that more than forty people told him for truth that they saw the standard of St. Mark of Venice at the top of one of the towers, and that no man knew who bore it thither.

Now hear of a strange miracle: those who were within the city fled and abandoned the walls, and the Venetians entered in, each as fast and as best he could, and seized twenty-five of the towers, and manned them with their people. And the doge took a boat, and sent messengers to the barons of the host to tell them that he had taken twenty-five towers, and that they might know that such towers could not be retaken. The barons were so overjoyed that they could not believe their ears; and the Venetians began to send to the host in boats the horses and palfreys they had taken. . . .

Then the emperor Alexius issued from the city, with all his forces, by other gates which were at least a league from the camp; and so many began to issue forth that it seemed as if the whole world were there assembled. The emperor marshaled his troops in the plain, and they rode toward the camp; and when our Frenchmen saw them coming, they ran to arms from all sides. . . .

It seemed as if the whole plain was covered with troops, and they advanced slowly and in order. Well might we appear in perilous case, for we had but six divisions, while the Greeks had fully forty, and there was not one of their divisions but was larger than any of ours. But ours were ordered in such a way that none could attack them save in front. . . .

For a long space the armies of the pilgrims and of the Greeks stood one against the other; because the Greeks did not dare to throw themselves upon our ranks, and our people would not move from their palisades. . . . Thus did the battle remain

for that day. As it pleased God nothing further was done. The emperor Alexius returned to the city, and those of the host to their quarters — the latter taking off their armor, for they were weary and overwrought; and they ate and drank little, seeing that their store of food was but scanty.

Now listen to the miracles of our Lord — how gracious are they whithersoever it pleases Him to perform them! That very night the emperor Alexius took of his treasure as much as he could carry, and took with him as many of his people as would go, and so fled and abandoned Constantinople. And those who remained in the city were astonished and they drew to the prison in which lay the emperor Isaac, whose eyes had been put out. Him they clothed imperially, and bore to the great palace of Blachernæ and seated on a high throne; and there they did him obeisance as their lord. Then they took messengers, by the advice of the emperor Isaac, and sent them to the host, announcing that Alexius had fled and that they had again raised up Isaac as emperor.

61. Foundation of the Latin Empire [1]

The immediate purpose of the expedition had now been attained. Constantinople had been reached, the usurper put to flight, and Isaac restored to the throne. But the young Alexius could not, or would not, keep his promise to the crusaders. At length they sent six envoys to him to demand, under threat of force, the fulfillment of the agreement.

For this embassy were chosen Conon of Bethune, Geoffroy de Villehardouin, the marshal of Champagne, and Miles of Provins; and the doge also sent three chief men of his council. So these envoys mounted their horses and, with swords girt, rode together till they came to the palace of Blachernæ. And be it known to you that, by reason of the treachery of the Greeks, they went in great peril and on a hard adventure.

They dismounted at the gate, entered the palace, and found

[1] Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ch. xlvi, secs. 211–215; ch. lvi, secs. 252–255.

Alexius and Isaac seated on two thrones, side by side. And near them was seated the empress, who was the wife of the father, and stepmother of the son, and sister to the king of Hungary — a lady both fair and good. And there were with them a great company of people of note and rank, so that well did the court seem to be that of a rich and mighty prince.

By desire of the other envoys Conon of Bethune, who was very wise and eloquent of speech, acted as spokesman. "Sire," said he, "we have come to thee on the part of the barons of the host and of the doge of Venice. They would put thee in mind of the great service they have done to thee — a service known to the people and manifest to all men. Thou hast sworn, thou and thy father, to fulfill the promised covenants, and they have your charters in hand. But you have not fulfilled those covenants well, as you should have done. Many times have they called upon you to do so, and now again we call upon you, in the presence of all your barons, to fulfill the covenants that are between you and them. Should you do so, it shall be well. If not, be it known to you that from this day forth they will not hold you as lord or friend, but will endeavor to obtain their due by all the means in their power. And of this they now give you warning, seeing that they would not injure you, or anyone, without first defiance given; for never have they acted treacherously, nor in their land is it customary to do so. You have heard what we have said. It is for you to take counsel thereon according to your pleasure."

Much were the Greeks amazed and greatly outraged by this open defiance; and they said that never had anyone been so hardy as to dare defy the emperor of Constantinople in his own hall. Very evil were the looks now cast on the envoys by Alexius and by all the Greeks, who once were wont to regard them very favorably.

Great was the tumult there within, and the envoys turned about and came to the gate and mounted their horses. When they got outside the gate, there was not one of them but felt glad at heart; nor is that to be marveled at, for they had

escaped from very great peril, and it was remarkable that they were not all killed or taken. So they returned to the camp, and told the barons how they had fared.

The continual friction between the Greeks and the crusaders passed at length into the open fire of war. The latter now resolved to storm Constantinople and to appropriate for themselves the territories of the Roman Empire in the East. Their crusade had ceased to be a crusade, and had become an expedition of conquest and plunder. Constantinople fell after a hard struggle, and the victors at once proceeded to divide the spoil of what was then the largest and richest city in the Christian world.

Then it was proclaimed throughout the host by Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, who was lord of the host, and by the barons, and by the doge of Venice, that all the booty should be collected and brought together, as had been covenanted under oath and pain of excommunication. Three churches were appointed for the receiving of the spoils, and guards were set to have them in charge, both Franks and Venetians, the most upright that could be found.

Then each began to bring in such booty as he had taken and to collect it together. And some brought in loyally, and some in evil sort, because covetousness, which is the root of all evil, hindered them. So from that time forth the covetous began to keep things back, and our Lord began to love them less. Ah God! how loyally they had borne themselves up to now! And well had the Lord God shown them that in all things He was ready to honor and exalt them above all people. But often do the good suffer for the sins of the wicked.

The spoils and booty were collected together, and you must know that all was not brought into the common stock, for not a few kept things back, in spite of the excommunication of the pope. That which was brought to the churches was divided, in equal parts, between the Franks and the Venetians, according to the sworn covenant. And you must know further that the pilgrims, after the division had been made, paid out of their share fifty thousand marks of silver to the Venetians, and then

divided at least one hundred thousand marks between themselves, among their own people. And shall I tell you in what manner? Two sergeants on foot counted as one mounted, and two sergeants mounted as one knight. And you must know that no man received more, either on account of his rank or because of his deeds, than that which had been so settled and ordered — save in so far as he may have stolen it.

And as to theft, and those who were convicted thereof, you must know that stern justice was meted out to such as were found guilty, and not a few were hanged. The count of St. Paul hung one of his knights, who had kept back certain spoils, with his shield to his neck; but many there were, both great and small, who kept back part of the spoils, and it was never known. Well may you be assured that the booty was very great, for if it had not been for what was stolen, and for the part given to the Venetians, there would have been at least four hundred thousand marks of silver, and at least ten thousand horses. Thus were divided the spoils of Constantinople, as you have heard.

The Latin Empire of Constantinople lasted little more than half a century (1204–1261). At the end of this period the Greeks recovered Constantinople and restored the former empire. If the crusaders, instead of giving themselves up to greed, rapine, and oppression, had governed wisely and well, they might have established a permanent state in eastern Europe and thus have barred the way against the entrance of the Ottoman Turks, two hundred years later. It was a great opportunity lost.

CHAPTER XIV

ST. LOUIS [1]

As Villehardouin was the first, so Jean de Joinville (1224–1319) was the second, of the great French chroniclers of the Middle Ages. Like Villehardouin, Joinville describes a crusade, in this case the crusade which St. Louis, king of France, undertook in 1248. Joinville accompanied his royal master to Egypt and the Holy Land, and shared all the perils of what proved to be a disastrous enterprise. The crusade is set forth at length in Joinville's narrative. The most interesting passages are those which describe the French king, for whom Joinville felt unbounded admiration. St. Louis is generally considered a most remarkable figure in medieval history, at once one of the ablest and one of the noblest rulers France ever had. We are fortunate, therefore, in possessing Joinville's biography, written when he was a very old man and St. Louis had long been dead. In St. Louis Joinville found realized a high ideal of Christian manhood, and he labors with success to paint a faithful portrait of the friend of his youth, who had been to him both king and saint.

62. Virtues of St. Louis [2]

The great love that he bore to his people appeared in what he said, during a very severe sickness that he had at Fontainebleau, unto Louis, his eldest son. "Fair son," he said, "I pray thee make thyself beloved by the people of thy kingdom; for

[1] *Memoirs of the Crusades by Villehardouin and De Joinville*, translated by Sir Frank Marzials. London, 1908. J. M. Dent and Sons.

[2] Joinville, *Histoire de St. Louis*, ch. iii, secs. 21–24; ch. iv, secs. 26, 29; ch. v, secs. 30–32.

truly I would rather that a Scot should come out of Scotland and govern the people of the kingdom well and equitably than that thou shouldest govern it ill in the sight of all men." The holy king so loved truth, that he would never consent to lie to the Saracens, as to any covenant that he had made with them.

In his eating he was so sober, that on no day of my life did I ever hear him order special meats, as many rich men are wont to do; but he ate patiently whatever his cooks had made ready and was set before him. In his words he was temperate; for on no day of my life did I ever hear him speak evil of anyone; nor did I ever hear him name the Devil — which name is very commonly spoken throughout the kingdom, whereby God, as I believe, is not well pleased.

He put water into his wine by measure, according as he saw that the strength of the wine required it. At Cyprus he asked me why I put no water into my wine; and I said this was by order of the physicians, who told me I had a large head and a cold stomach, so that I could not get drunk. And he answered that they deceived me; for if I did not learn to put water into my wine in my youth, and wished to do so in my old age, gout and diseases of the stomach would take hold upon me, and I should never be in health; and if I drank pure wine in my old age, I should get drunk every night, and that it was too foul a thing for a brave man to get drunk.

He asked me if I wished to be honored in this world, and to go into paradise at my death? And I said "Yes," and he said, "Keep yourself then from knowingly doing or saying anything which, if the whole world heard thereof, you would be ashamed to acknowledge. . . ."

He called me once to him and said, "Because of the subtle mind that is in you I dare now speak to you of the things relating to God; so I have summoned these two monks that are here, as I want to ask you a question." Now the question was this: "Seneschal," said he, "what manner of thing is God?" And I said, "Sire, it is so good a thing that there cannot be better." "Of a truth," said he, "you have answered well;

for the answer that you have given is written in this book that I hold in my hand." . . .

He asked me if I washed the feet of the poor on Holy Thursday. "Sire," said I, "it would make me sick! The feet of these people will I not wash." "In truth," said he, "that was ill said; for you should never disdain what God did for our teaching. So I pray you, for the love of God first, and then for the love of me, that you accustom yourself to wash the feet of the poor."

He so loved all manner of people who had faith in God and loved Him, that he gave the constableship of France to Giles Le Brun, who was not of the kingdom of France, because men held him in such great repute for his faith and for love to God. And verily I believe that his good repute was well deserved.

He caused Master Robert of Sorbon to eat at his table, because of the high reputation which he had as a man of uprightness and worth. One day it chanced that Master Robert was eating at my side, and we were talking to one another. The king took us up, and said, "Speak out, for your companions think you are speaking ill of them. If you talk at table of things that can give us pleasure, speak out, and, if not, hold your peace."

When the king would be mirthful he would say to me, "Seneschal, tell me the reasons why a man of uprightness and worth is better than a friar?" Then would begin a discussion between me and Master Robert. When we had disputed for a long while, the king would give sentence as follows: "Master Robert, willingly would I bear the title of upright and worthy, provided I were such in reality — and all the rest you might have. For uprightness and worth are such great things and such good things that even to name them fills the mouth pleasantly."

63. How St. Louis Worshiped and did Justice [1]

The rule of his land was so arranged that every day he heard the canonical hours sung, and a *Requiem* mass without song;

[1] Joinville, *Histoire de St. Louis*, ch. xi, secs. 54–60.

and then, if it was convenient, the mass of the day, or of the saint, with song. Every day he rested in his bed after having eaten, and when he had slept and rested, he said, privately in his chamber — he and one of his chaplains together — the office for the dead; and afterwards he heard vespers. At night he heard complines.

A Franciscan monk came to him at the castle of Hyères and said in his sermon, for the king's instruction, that he had read the Bible and the books pertaining to heathen princes, and that he had never found, either among believers or unbelievers, that a kingdom had been lost or had changed lords, unless there had first been failure of justice. "Therefore let the king, who is going into France, take good heed," said he, "that he do justice well and speedily among his people, so that our Lord suffer his kingdom to remain in peace all the days of his life." It is said that the right worthy man, who thus instructed the king, lies buried at Marseilles, where our Lord, for his sake, performs many a fine miracle. . . . The king forgot not the teaching of the friar, but ruled his land very loyally and godly, as you shall hear. . . .

And when he came back from church, he would send for us and sit at the foot of his bed, and make us all sit round him, and ask if there were any whose cases could not be settled save by himself in person. And we named the litigants; and he would then send for them and ask, "Why do you not accept what our people offer?" And they would make reply, "Sire, because they offer us very little." Then would he say, "You would do well to accept what is proposed, as our people desire." And the saintly man endeavored thus, with all his power, to bring them into a straight and reasonable path.

Ofttimes it happened that he would go, after his mass, and seat himself in the wood of Vincennes, and lean against an oak and make us sit round him. And all those who had any case in hand came and spoke to him, without hindrance of usher or of any other person. Then would he ask, out of his own mouth, "Is there anyone who has a case in hand?" And

those who had a case in hand stood up. Then would he say, "Keep silence all, and you shall be heard in turn, one after the other." Then he would call Lord Peter of Fontaines and Lord Geoffroy of Villette, and say to one of them, "Settle me this case." And when he saw that there was anything to amend in the words of those who spoke on his behalf, or in the words of those who spoke on behalf of any other person, he would himself, out of his own mouth, amend what they had said. . . .

64. Instructions of St. Louis to His Son [1]

"Confess thyself often, and choose for confessor a right worthy man who knows how to teach thee what to do, and what not to do; and bear thyself in such sort that thy confessor and thy friends shall dare to reprove thee for thy misdoings. Listen to the services of holy Church devoutly, and without chattering; and pray to God with thy heart and with thy lips, and especially at mass when the consecration takes place. Let thy heart be tender and full of pity toward those who are poor, miserable, and afflicted; and comfort and help them to the utmost of thy power.

"Maintain the good customs of thy realm, and abolish the bad. Be not covetous against thy people; and do not burden them with taxes except when thou art in great need. . . .

"See that thou hast in thy company men, whether religious or lay, who are right worthy, and loyal, and not full of covetousness, and confer with them often; and fly the company of the wicked. Hearken willingly to the Word of God, and keep it in thine heart; and seek diligently after prayers and indulgences. Love all that is good and profitable, and hate all that is evil wheresoever it may be. . . .

"In order to do justice to thy subjects, be upright and firm, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, but always to what is just; and do thou maintain the cause of the poor until such time as the truth is made clear. And if anyone has an

[1] Joinville, *Histoire de St. Louis*, ch. cxlv, secs. 742–743, 745, 747–750, 752–754.

action against thee, make full inquisition until thou knowest the truth; for thus shall thy counselors judge the more boldly according to the truth, whether for thee or against.

"If thou holdest aught that belongeth to another, whether by thine own act or the act of thy predecessors, and the matter be certain, make restoration without delay. If the matter be doubtful, cause inquiry to be made by wise men, diligently and promptly.

"Give heed that thy servants and thy subjects live under thee in peace and uprightness. Especially maintain the good cities and commons of thy realm in the same condition and with the same privileges as they enjoyed under thy predecessors; and if there be aught to amend, amend and set it right, and keep them in thy favor and love. For because of the power and wealth of the great cities, thine own subjects, and specially thy peers and thy barons, and foreigners also, will fear to undertake aught against thee.

"Love and honor all persons belonging to holy Church, and see that no one takes away, or diminishes, the gifts and alms made to them by thy predecessors. It is related of King Philip, my grandfather,[1] that one of his counselors once told him that those of holy Church did him much harm and damage, in that they deprived him of his rights, and diminished his jurisdiction, and that it was a great wonder that he suffered it; and the good king replied that he believed this might well be so, but he had regard to the benefits and courtesies that God had bestowed upon him, and so thought it better to abandon some of his rights than to have any contention with the people of holy Church. . . .

"Beware of undertaking a war against any Christian prince without great deliberation; and if it has to be undertaken, see that thou do no hurt to holy Church, and to those who have done thee no injury. If wars and dissensions arise among thy subjects, see that thou appease them as soon as thou art able.

"Use diligence to have good provosts and bailiffs, and

[1] Philip II (Augustus), 1180–1223.

inquire often of them, and of those of thy household, how they conduct themselves, and if there be found in them any vice of inordinate covetousness, or falsehood, or trickery. Labor to free thy land from all iniquity, and especially strike down with all thy power evil swearing and heresy. See to it that the expense of thy household be reasonable.

"Finally, my very dear son, cause masses to be sung for my soul, and prayers to be said throughout thy realm; and give to me a special share and full part in all the good thou doest. Fair dear son, I give thee all the blessings that a good father can give to his son." . . .

CHAPTER XV

EPISODES OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR[1]

JEAN FROISSART (about 1338–1410), the third of the great French chroniclers of the Middle Ages, chose for his theme the history of the fourteenth century in western Europe. In Froissart's time the feudal age was drawing to an end, and with the decline of feudalism went the decay of knighthood and chivalry. Froissart was steeped in the spirit of chivalry. He loved nothing better than a tale of the old heroic days, and he spent a large part of his life traveling through the different countries of Europe, in order to collect the materials for his *Chronicles*. He himself declares that he had searched the greater part of Christendom, "and wherever I came, I made inquiry after those ancient knights and squires who had been present at feats of arms, and who were well qualified to describe them. I sought also for heralds of good repute to verify what I heard elsewhere of these matters. In this manner have I gathered the facts in this noble history. . . . As long as through God's grace I shall live, I shall continue it, for the more I work at it, the greater pleasure I receive." Froissart's *Chronicles* is a very large book, written quite uncritically and in a rambling, disconnected fashion. The author always tells an interesting story; but he is not a real historian. The pages of Froissart breathe,

[1] *Froissart's Chronicles of England, France, Spain, and the Adjoining Countries*, translated by Thomas Johnes, London, 1849.

nevertheless, the spirit of the times to which they belong, and the judgment of many generations of readers has been unanimous in according to him a high place among the eminent writers, not only of France, but of the world. Some of the best-known chapters in the *Chronicles* are those dealing with the early campaigns of the Hundred Years' War between England and France.

65. Battle of Crécy [1]

The Hundred Years' War began in 1337, when Edward III of England declared himself to be the lawful ruler of France and prepared to support his pretensions by force of arms. The first nine years of the contest were uneventful, but in 1346 Edward landed in France with about 20,000 troops, more than half of them being archers. Near the village of Crécy he encountered Philip VI, the French king. Philip's army, probably about 60,000 strong, included a large body of Genoese crossbowmen and the flower of French knighthood.

The English, who were drawn up in three divisions and seated on the ground, on seeing their enemies advance, rose up undauntedly and fell into their ranks. That of the Prince of Wales [2] was the first to do so, whose archers were formed in the manner of a portcullis, or harrow, with the men-at-arms in the rear. The earls of Northampton and Arundel, who commanded the second division, had posted themselves in good order on his wing, to assist and succor the prince if necessary.

You must know that these kings, earls, barons, and lords of France did not advance in any regular order, but one after the other, or any way most pleasing to themselves. As soon as the king of France came in sight of the English, his blood began to boil, and he cried out to his marshals, "Order the Genoese forward, and begin the battle, in the name of God and St.

[1] Froissart, *Chroniques*, bk. i, pt. i, chs. 287–288, 290, 292, 294.

[2] The Black Prince, as he was afterwards called, was at this time a lad of sixteen.

Denis."[1] There were about fifteen thousand Genoese crossbowmen; but they were quite fatigued, having marched on foot that day six leagues, completely armed, and with their crossbows. They told the marshals that they were not in a fit condition to do any great things that day in battle. The earl of Alençon, hearing this, said, "This is what one gets by employing such scoundrels, who fall off when there is any need for them." During this time a heavy rain fell, accompanied by thunder and a very terrible eclipse of the sun; and before this rain a great flight of crows hovered in the air over all those battalions, making a loud noise. Shortly afterwards it cleared up, and the sun shone very bright; but the Frenchmen had it in their faces, and the English in their backs.

When the Genoese were somewhat in order and approached the English, they set up a loud shout, in order to frighten them; but the latter remained quite still and did not seem to attend to it. They then set up a second shout and advanced a little forward; but the English never moved. They hooted a third time, advancing with their crossbows presented, and began to shoot. The English archers then advanced one step forward, and shot their arrows with such force and quickness that it seemed as if it snowed. When the Genoese felt these arrows, which pierced their arms and heads and through their armor, some of them cut the strings of their crossbows, others flung them on the ground, and all turned about and retreated, quite discomfited. The French had a large body of men-at-arms on horseback, to support the Genoese. The king of France, seeing them thus fall back, cried out, "Kill me those scoundrels; for they stop up our road, without any reason." You would then have seen the men-at-arms lay about them, killing all they could of these runaways.

The English continued shooting as vigorously and quickly as before. Some of their arrows fell among the horsemen, who were sumptuously equipped, and, killing and wounding many, made them caper and fall among the Genoese, so that

[1] The patron saint of France.

they were in such confusion they could never rally again. In the English army there were some Cornishmen and Welshmen on foot, who had armed themselves with large knives; these, advancing through the ranks of the men-at-arms and archers, who made way for them, came upon the French when they were in this danger, and, falling upon earls, barons, knights, and squires, slew many, at which the king of England was afterwards much exasperated.[1]

The valiant king of Bohemia was slain there. . . . Having heard the order of the battle, he inquired where his son was; his attendants answered that they did not know, but believed he was fighting. The king said to them, "Gentlemen, you are all my people, my friends, and brethren-at-arms this day; therefore, as I am blind, I request you to lead me so far into the engagment that I may strike one stroke with my sword." The knights replied that they would directly lead him forward; and, in order that they might not lose him in the crowd, they fastened all the reins of their horses together, and put the king at their head, and advanced toward the enemy. . . . The king rode in among the enemy and made good use of his sword; for he and his companions fought most gallantly. They advanced so far that they were all slain; and on the morrow they were found on the ground, with their horses all tied together. . . .

Early in the day some French, Germans, and Savoyards had broken through the archers of the prince's battalion and had engaged with the men-at-arms; upon which the second battalion came to his aid, and it was time, for otherwise he would have been hard pressed. The first division, seeing the danger they were in, sent a knight in great haste to the king of England, who was posted upon an eminence near a windmill. On the knight's arrival, he said, "Sir, the earl of Warwick, Lord Stafford, Lord Reginald Cobham, and the others who are about your son, are vigorously attacked by the French; and they beg you to come to their assistance with your battalion,

[1] The French knights, if taken prisoners, would have brought large ransoms.

for, if their numbers should increase, they fear he will have too much to do." The king replied, "Is my son dead, unhorsed, or so badly wounded that he cannot support himself?" "Nothing of the sort, thank God," rejoined the knight; "but he is in so hot an engagement that he has great need of your help." The king answered, "Now, Sir Thomas, return back to those that sent you and tell them from me, not to send again for me this day, or expect that I shall come, let what will happen, as long as my son has life; and say that I command them to let the boy win his spurs; for I am determined, if it please God, that all the glory and honor of this day shall be given to him and to those into whose care I have intrusted him." The knight returned to his lords and related the king's answer, which mightily encouraged them and made them repent they had ever sent such a message. . . .

Late after vespers, the king of France had not more about him than sixty men, every one included. Sir John of Hainault, who was of the number, had once remounted the king; for his horse had been killed under him by an arrow; he said to the king, "Sir, retreat while you have an opportunity, and do not expose yourself so needlessly; if you have lost this battle, another time you will be the conqueror." After he had said this, he took the bridle of the king's horse, and led him off by force. The king rode on until he came to the castle of La Broyes, where he found the gates shut, for it was very dark. The king ordered the governor of it to be summoned; he came upon the battlements and asked who it was that called at such an hour? The king answered, "Open, open, governor; it is the fortune of France." The governor, hearing the king's voice, immediately descended, opened the gate, and let down the bridge. The king and his company entered the castle; but he had with him only five barons. . . . The king would not bury himself in such a place as that, but, having taken some refreshments, set out again with his attendants about midnight, and rode on, under the direction of guides who were well acquainted with the country, until, about daybreak, he came to Amiens, where he halted.

This Saturday the English never quitted their ranks in pursuit of anyone, but remained on the field, guarding their position and defending themselves against all who attacked them. The battle was ended at the hour of vespers. When, on this Saturday night, the English heard no more hooting or shouting, nor any more crying out to particular lords or their banners, they looked upon the field as their own and their enemies as beaten. They made great fires and lighted torches because of the obscurity of the night. King Edward then came down from his post, who all that day had not put on his helmet, and with his whole battalion, advanced to the Prince of Wales, whom he embraced in his arms and kissed, and said, "Sweet son, God give you good perseverance; you are my son, for most loyally have you acquitted yourself this day; you are worthy to be a sovereign." The prince bowed down very low, and humbled himself, giving all honor to the king his father. The English, during the night, made frequent thanksgivings to the Lord for the happy issue of the day, and without rioting, for the king had forbidden all riot or noise.

The battle of Crécy, as Froissart describes it, was a struggle between the crossbow and the longbow, between footmen and mailed knights, between a huge but disorderly array of feudal nobles and a smaller but well-disciplined force of common soldiers. The issue of the battle struck a mortal blow at the old methods of warfare and at the feudal system, as well.

66. Surrender of Calais [1]

Immediately after the victory of Crécy Edward started for Calais, the most important town in northern France. With Dover on the opposite shore, it commanded the Channel, and Edward was anxious to secure it. The place was too strong to be carried by assault, so Edward determined to starve the defenders into surrender. Philip appeared before the walls with another army, but at the last moment suddenly withdrew, unwilling to risk a second defeat at the hands of the English.

After the departure of the French king with his army, the citizens of Calais saw clearly that all hopes of succor were at

[1] Froissart, *Chroniques*, bk. i, pt. i, chs. 320–321.

an end; a fact which occasioned them so much sorrow and distress that the hardiest could scarcely support it. They entreated therefore, most earnestly, Lord John de Vienne, their governor, to mount upon the battlements and make a sign that he wished to hold a parley. The king of England, upon hearing this, sent to him Sir Walter Manny and Lord Basset. When they were come near, Lord de Vienne said to them, "Dear gentlemen, you who are very valiant knights, know that the king of France, whose subjects we are, has sent us hither to defend this town and castle from all harm and damage; this we have done to the best of our abilities. All hopes of help have now left us, so that we are most exceedingly straitened; and if your king have not pity upon us, we must perish with hunger. I therefore entreat that you would beg him to have compassion on us, and to have the goodness to allow us to depart in the state we are in, and that he will be satisfied with having possession of the town and castle, with all that is within them, as he will find therein riches enough to content him."

The English king, when this offer of surrender reached him, consented to treat with the French governor only on condition that six of the principal citizens of Calais should come forth with halters around their necks and the keys of the town in their hands. The remainder of the inhabitants he promised to pardon.

Sir Walter Manny returned to Lord de Vienne, who was waiting for him on the walls, and told him all that he had been able to gain from the king. "I beg of you," replied the governor, "that you would be so good as to remain here a little, while I go and relate all that has passed to the townsmen; for, as they have desired me to undertake this, it is but proper they should know the result of it." He went to the market place and caused the bell to be rung; upon which all the inhabitants, men and women, assembled in the town hall. He then related to them what he had said and the answers he had received; and that he could not obtain any conditions more favorable, to which they must give a short and immediate answer. This information caused the greatest lamentations and despair; so that the

hardest heart would have had compassion on them; even Lord de Vienne wept bitterly.

After a short time the most wealthy citizen of the town, by name Eustace de St. Pierre, rose up and said, "Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be a very great pity to suffer so many people to die through famine, if any means could be found to prevent it; and it would be highly meritorious in the eyes of our Savior, if such misery could be averted. I have such faith and trust in finding grace before God, if I die to save my townsmen, that I name myself as first of the six." When Eustace had done speaking, they all rose up and almost worshiped him: many cast themselves at his feet with tears and groans. Another citizen, very rich and respected, rose up and said that he would be the second to his companion, Eustace; his name was John Daire. After him, James Wisant, who was very rich in merchandise and lands, offered himself, as companion to his two cousins; as did Peter Wisant, his brother. Two others then named themselves, which completed the number demanded by the king of England. Lord John de Vienne then mounted a small hackney, for it was with difficulty that he could walk, and conducted them to the gate.

There was the greatest sorrow and lamentation all over the town; and in such manner were they attended to the gate, which the governor ordered to be opened, and then shut upon him and the six citizens, whom he led to the barriers. He then said to Sir Walter Manny, who was there waiting for him, "I deliver up to you, as governor of Calais, with the consent of the inhabitants, these six citizens; and I swear to you that they were, and are at this day, the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants of Calais. I beg of you, gentle sir, that you would have the goodness to beseech the king that they may not be put to death." "I cannot answer for what the king will do with them," replied Sir Walter, "but you may be sure that I will do all in my power to save them." . . .

When Sir Walter Manny had presented these six citizens to the king, they fell upon their knees and, with uplifted hands,

said, "Most gallant king, see before you six citizens of Calais, who have been important merchants and who bring you the keys of the castle and of the town. We surrender ourselves to your absolute will and pleasure, in order to save the remainder of the inhabitants of Calais, who have suffered much distress and misery. Condescend, therefore, out of your nobleness of mind, to have mercy and compassion upon us." All the barons, knights, and squires, who were assembled there in great numbers, wept at this sight. The king eyed them with angry looks (for he hated much the people of Calais, for the great losses he had formerly suffered from them at sea), and ordered their heads to be stricken off.

All present entreated the king that he would be more merciful to them, but he would not listen to them. Then Sir Walter Manny said, "Ah, gentle king, let me beseech you to restrain your anger; you have the reputation of great nobleness of soul, do not therefore tarnish it by such an act as this, nor allow anyone to speak in a disgraceful manner of you. In this instance all the world will say you have acted cruelly, if you put to death six such respectable persons, who, of their own free will, have surrendered themselves to your mercy, in order to save their fellow-citizens." Upon this, the king gave a sign, saying; "Be it so," and ordered the headsman to be sent for; since the citizens of Calais had done him so much damage, it was proper they should suffer for it.

But the queen of England fell on her knees and with tears said, "Ah, gentle sir, since I have crossed the sea with great danger to see you, I have never asked you one favor; now, I most humbly ask as a gift, for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary, and for your love to me, that you will be merciful to these six men." The king looked at her for some time in silence, and then said, "Ah, lady, I wish you had been anywhere else than here, you have entreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you; I therefore give them to you, to do as you please with them." The queen conducted the six citizens to her apartments and had the halters taken from around their necks,

after which she newly clothed them and served them with a plentiful dinner: she then presented each one with a sum of money and had them escorted out of the camp in safety.

67. Battle of Poitiers [1]

The Black Prince, who had won his spurs at Crécy, gained a famous victory, ten years later, over the French king John, at Poitiers. As at Crécy, the French outnumbered the English about three to one, but bad generalship prevented them from using effectively their superior force. Once more, too, the longbow, in the hands of sturdy English archers proved its effectiveness against mail-clad knights.

To say the truth, the English archers were of infinite service to their army; for they shot so thickly and so well that the French did not know which way to turn themselves to avoid the arrows; by this means they kept advancing by little and little and gained ground. When the men-at-arms perceived that the first battalion was beaten, and that the one under the duke of Normandy was in disorder and beginning to open, they hastened to mount their horses, which they had close at hand. As soon as they were all mounted, they gave a shout of "St. George, for Guienne!" and Sir John Chandos said to the prince, "Sir, sir, now push forward, for the day is ours; God will this day put it in your hand. Let us make for our adversary the king of France; for where he is will lie the main stress of the business; I well know that his valor will not let him fly; and he will remain with us, if it please God and St. George; but he must be well fought with; and you have before said that you would show yourself this day a good knight." The prince replied, "John, get forward; you shall not see me turn my back this day, but I will always be among the foremost." He then said to Sir Walter Woodland, his banner-bearer, "Banner, advance, in the name of God and St. George." [2] The knight obeyed the commands of the prince. In that part of the field the battle was very hot, and greatly crowded; many a knight

[1] Froissart, *Chroniques*, bk. i, pt. ii, chs. 41–42, 44–45, 49.

[2] The patron saint of England.

was unhorsed, and you must know that whenever anyone fell, he could not get up again, unless he were quickly assisted.

King John, on his part, proved himself a good knight; and, if a fourth of his people had behaved as well, the day would have been his own. Those, however, who had remained with him acquitted themselves to the best of their power, and were either slain or taken prisoners. Scarcely any who were with the king attempted to escape. . . . King John himself did wonders: he was armed with a battle-ax, with which he fought and defended himself. . . . There was much pressing at this time, through eagerness to capture the king; and those who were nearest to him and knew him cried out, "Surrender yourself, surrender yourself, or you are a dead man." In that part of the field was a young knight from St. Omer, who was engaged at a salary in the service of the king of England; his name was Denys de Morbeque. . . . It fortunately happened for this knight that he was at the time near to the king of France, when he was so much pulled about. Denys, by dint of force, for he was very strong and robust, pushed through the crowd and said to the king in good French, "Sire, sire, surrender yourself." The king, who found himself very disagreeably situated, turning to him, asked, "To whom shall I surrender myself: to whom? Where is my cousin, the Prince of Wales? If I could see him, I would speak to him." "Sire," replied Denys, "he is not here; but surrender yourself to me and I will lead you to him." "Who are you?" said the king. "Sire, I am Denys de Morbeque, a knight from Artois; but I serve the king of England, because I cannot belong to France, having forfeited all I possessed there. The king then gave him his right-hand glove and said, "I surrender myself to you." There was much crowding and pushing about, for every one was eager to cry out, "I have taken him." Neither the king nor his youngest son Philip was able to get forward and free himself from the throng. . . .

The king, to escape from this peril, said, "Gentlemen, gentlemen, I pray you conduct me and my son in a courteous manner to my cousin, the prince; and do not make such a riot about

my capture, for I am so great a lord that I can make all sufficiently rich." These words, and others which fell from the king, appeased them a little; but the disputes were always beginning again, and they did not move a step without rioting. When the prince's barons saw this troop of people, they stuck spurs into their horses and hastened up to them. On their arrival, they asked what was the matter; they were answered that it was the king of France, who had been made prisoner, and that upwards of ten knights and squires challenged him at the same time as belonging to each of them. The two barons then pushed through the crowd by main force, and ordered all to draw aside. They commanded, in the name of the prince, and under pain of instant death, that every one should keep his distance and not approach unless ordered or desired so to do. They all retreated behind the king; and the two barons, dismounting, advanced to the king with profound reverences and conducted him in a peaceable manner to the Prince of Wales.

When evening had come, the Prince of Wales gave a supper in his pavilion to the king of France, and to the greater part of the princes and barons who were prisoners. The prince seated the king of France and his son Philip at an elevated and well-covered table. . . . The other knights and squires were placed at different tables. The prince himself served the king's table, as well as the others, with every mark of humility, and would not sit down at it, in spite of all his entreaties for him so to do, saying that "he was not worthy of such an honor, nor did it appertain to him to seat himself at the table of so great a king, or of so valiant a man as he had shown himself by his actions that day." He added also with a noble air, "Dear sir, do not make a poor meal because the Almighty God has not gratified your wishes in the event of this day; for be assured that my lord and father will show you every honor and friendship in his power, and will arrange your ransom so reasonably that you will henceforward always remain friends. In my opinion, you have cause to be glad that the success of this battle did not turn out as you desired; for you have this day

acquired such high renown for prowess that you have surpassed all the best knights on your side. I do not, dear sir, say this to flatter you, for all those of our side who have seen and observed the actions of each party have unanimously allowed this to be your due and decree you the prize and garland for it." At the end of this speech there were murmurs of praise heard from every one; and the French said the prince had spoken nobly and truly and that he would be one of the most gallant rulers in Christendom, if God should grant him life to pursue his career of glory.

CHAPTER XVI

MEMOIRS OF A FRENCH COURTIER[1]

PHILIPPE DE COMMINES (about 1445–1511) was a prominent member of the French court during the reigns of Louis XI and Charles VIII. As a diplomat and minister he became intimately familar with European politics, and in his *Memoirs*, written in retirement during his later years, he has left us an extended account of what he saw and did. Commines has been called the "father of modern history." The title is not undeserved, for he was the first European historian who gave up the practice of merely chronicling events and attempted, instead, to delineate the characters of men and the causes and consequences of their actions. As a writer Commines was inferior to his French predecessors, Joinville[2] and Froissart,[3] but as a thinker he was much their superior.

68. Character of Louis XI[4]

Commines has drawn a faithful portrait of his patron, Louis XI (1461–1483), the crafty king who labored with such success to break the power of feudalism in France and make that country a strong, centralized state.

The chief reason that has induced me to enter upon this subject is that I have seen many deceptions, especially in servants toward their masters; and I have always found that proud and stately princes who will hear but few are more likely

[1] *The Memoirs of Philippe de Commines*, the translation revised by A. R. Scoble. 2 vols. London, 1855. George Bell and Sons.

[2] See page 118.

[3] See page 125.

[4] Commines, *Mémoires*, bk. i, ch. 10.

to be imposed on than those who are open and accessible. Of all the princes that I ever knew, the wisest and most dexterous to extricate himself out of any danger or difficulty in time of adversity was my master, Louis XI. He was very humble in his conversation and habit, and the most careful and indefatigable to win over any man to his side that he thought capable of doing him either mischief or service. Though he was often refused, he would never give over a man that he wished to gain, but still pressed and continued his insinuations, making great promises to him, and presenting him with such sums and honors as he knew would gratify his ambitions. . . .

He was naturally kind and indulgent to persons of mean estate, and hostile to all great men who had no need of him. No prince was more easy to converse with, or more inquisitive, than he, for his desire was to know everybody he could; and indeed he knew all persons of any authority or worth in England, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, in the territories of the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, and among his own subjects. By these qualities he preserved the crown upon his head, which was in much danger by the enemies he had created for himself upon his accession to the throne. But above all, his great bounty and liberality did him the utmost service; and yet, as he behaved with much wisdom in time of distress, so when he thought himself a little out of danger . . . he would disoblige the servants and officers of his court by mean and petty ways, which were little to his advantage; and as for peace, he could hardly endure the thought of it.

He spoke slightingly of most people, and rather before their faces than behind their backs, unless he was afraid of them, and of that sort there were a great many, for he was naturally somewhat timorous. When he had done himself any harm by his talk, or was apprehensive he should do so and wished to make amends, he would say to the person whom he had disobliged, "I am sensible my tongue has done me a great deal of mischief; but, on the other hand, it has sometimes done me much good; however, it is but reasonable that I should make some

reparation for the injury." And he never used this kind of apology without granting some favor to the person to whom he made it, and it was always of considerable amount.

It was certainly a great blessing from God upon my prince to have experienced adversity as well as prosperity, good as well as evil, especially if the good outweighs the evil, as it did in the case of the king, my master. I am of opinion that the troubles he was involved in, while a youth, when he fled from his father and resided for six years [1] with Philip, duke of Burgundy, were of great service to him; for there he learned to be complaisant to such as he had occasion to use, which was no slight advantage of adversity. As soon as he found himself a powerful and crowned king, his mind was wholly bent upon revenge; but he quickly discovered the inconvenience of this, repented by degrees of his indiscretion, and made sufficient reparation for his folly and error, by regaining those he had injured.

I am very confident that if his education had not been different from the usual education of such nobles as I have seen in France, he could not so easily have worked himself out of his troubles. For the French nobles are brought up to nothing but to make themselves ridiculous, both in their clothes and discourse; they have no knowledge of letters; no wise man is suffered to come near them, to improve their understanding; they have governors who manage their business, but they themselves do nothing; nay, there are some nobles who, though they have a large income, will take pride to bid you, "Go to my servants, and let them answer you"; thinking by such speeches to imitate the state and grandeur of a prince. I have seen their servants take great advantage of them, giving them to understand they were fools; and if afterwards they came to apply their minds to business and attempted to manage their own affairs, they began so late that they could make nothing of it. It is certain that all those who have performed any great or memorable action, worthy to be recorded in history, began always in their

[1] 1456–1461. Louis XI became king in 1461, on the death of his father, Charles VII.

youth; and this is to be attributed to the method of their education or some particular blessing from God.

69. The Divided State of Europe [1]

I cannot understand why God has preserved the city of Ghent so long, a city which has occasioned so much mischief and which brings no good either to the public or the country wherein it is seated, and much less to its prince. It is not like Bruges, which indeed is a place of trade and of great resort for foreigners of all nations, in which more commodities and merchandise are disposed of than in any other town in Europe, so that to have had that town destroyed would have been an irreparable loss. . . . In this respect Ghent is admirably well situated, for certainly the countries round about it are the most luxurious, the most splendid, and the most addicted to those pleasures to which man is inclined, of all those in Europe. Yet the people of Ghent are good Christians, and to outward appearance God is religiously honored and served.

But it is not the house of Burgundy alone that has a thorn in its side: France has England as a check; England has Scotland; and Spain, Portugal. I will not mention Granada, for its inhabitants are enemies to the true faith, though otherwise Granada has given the kingdom of Castile much trouble to this very day.[2]

The princes of Italy, who generally have no other title to their territories but what they derive from Heaven (and of that we can have no certain knowledge), and who rule their subjects with cruelty, violence, and oppression in respect to their taxes, are curbed and kept in check by the commonwealths and free states in Italy; namely, Venice, Florence, Genoa, Bologna, Siena, Pisa, Lucca, and others. These cities are in a great many respects diametrically opposed, they to the princes, and the princes to them; and all keep a watchful eye over one another, that none of them may grow too powerful

[1] Commines, *Mémoires*, bk. v, ch. 18.

[2] Granada was at this time, and until 1492, a Moorish kingdom

for his neighbor. But to come to particulars in relation to the state of Italy. The house of Aragon has that of Anjou to curb it; the Visconti dukes of Milan have the house of Orléans, and though they are feeble abroad, their subjects hold them in great dread. The Venetians have the princes of Italy, but more especially the Florentines, in opposition against them; and the Florentines, the neighboring commonwealths of Siena and Genoa. The Genoese are sufficiently plagued with their own bad government and treachery toward each other, not to mention their factions and parties; but this everybody knows so well that I shall dwell no longer on it.

In Germany you are well acquainted with the animosity that rages between the houses of Austria and Bavaria, and how the house of Bavaria is divided within itself. The house of Austria again has the Swiss for its enemy, upon the account only of a small canton, called Schwyz (not able to raise six hundred men). Now, however, the whole country takes its name from it, and is so increased in power and riches that two of the best towns belonging to the house of Austria are Zurich and Fribourg, both of which are in Switzerland. Besides, the Swiss have won several memorable battles, and have slain several of the dukes of Austria in the field.

There are also many other factions and private animosities in Germany; the house of Cleves against the house of Guelders, and the dukes of Guelders against the dukes of Juliers. The Easterlings[1] (that remote people in the north) withstand the kings of Denmark; and, to speak in general of all Germany, there are so many fortified places, and so many people in them ready for all manner of mischief (as plundering, robbing, and killing) upon every trivial occasion, that it is a wonder to think of it. A private person, with only one servant to wait on him, will defy a whole city, and declare war against a duke, that he may have a pretense to rob him; especially if he has a little castle, perched upon a rock, to retreat to, where he can keep twenty or thirty horsemen to scour the country and plunder

[1] North Germans.

according to his directions. Robbers of this kind are seldom punished by the German princes, who employ them upon all occasions; but the towns and free states punish them severely whenever they catch any of them, and have often besieged and blown up their castles. . . . So that these princes and towns in Germany are placed in this opposition and discord, that no one may encroach upon his neighbor — a situation which is absolutely necessary, not only in Germany, but all the world over. . . .

70. A Description of Venice [1]

In 1495 Charles VIII sent Commines as ambassador to Venice. That city-republic was then at the height of its power and splendor.

. . . I was extremely surprised at the situation of this city, where so many churches, monasteries, and houses are all in the water. The people have no other passage up and down the streets but in boats, of which, I believe, they have about thirty thousand, but these are very small. About the city there are seventy religious houses, both of men and women. The houses are situated on little islands, and are very beautiful and magnificent both in building and furniture, with fair gardens belonging to them. . . . Indeed, it is most strange to behold so many stately churches in the sea. . . .

I was conducted through the principal street, which they call the Grand Canal. It is so wide that galleys frequently cross one another; indeed I have seen vessels of four hundred tons or more ride at anchor just by the houses. It is the fairest and best-built street, I think, in the world, and goes quite through the city. The houses are very large and lofty, and built of stone; the old ones are all painted; those of about a hundred years standing are faced with white marble from Istria [2] (which is about a hundred miles from Venice), and inlaid with porphyry and serpentine. Within, most of them have at least two chambers adorned with gilt ceilings, rich marble chimney-pieces,

[1] Commines, *Mémoires*, bk. vii, ch. 18.

[2] The peninsula of Istria, projecting into the Adriatic.

gilded bedsteads, and splendid furnishings. In short, it is the most splendid city that I have ever seen, the most respectful to all ambassadors and strangers, governed with the greatest wisdom, and serving God with the most solemnity; so that, though in other things the inhabitants might be faulty, I believe God blesses them for the reverence they show in the service of the Church. . . .

I delivered my credentials to the doge,[1] who presides in all their councils and is honored as a king. All letters are addressed to him, but of himself he cannot do much; yet this one had greater authority than any of his predecessors, for he had been doge for over twelve years. I found him a prudent man, of great experience in the affairs of Italy, and civil and courteous in his person. The first day of my arrival was spent in exchanging compliments and viewing three or four chambers in the doge's palace, in which the ceilings, beds, and portals were all richly gilded; the apartments are very fine, but the court is not large. The palace is luxurious in all its appointments, being built of finely carved marble. The whole front and facings are of stone, with gilt an inch thick. . . . The doge from his own chamber can hear mass at the high altar in the church of St. Mark, which, for a church, is the most magnificent piece of building in the world, being built of mosaic work in every part. The Venetians pretend to be the inventors of this mosaic work; and, indeed, it is a great trade among them, as I have seen.

In this church their treasure (of which so much is said) is kept, and intended only for the decoration of their churches: there are twelve or fourteen rubies, the largest I ever saw; one of them weighs seven, the other, eight hundred carats, but both of them are unpolished; there are twelve other stones in cases of gold, with the edges and forepart set richly with very fine jewels. There are also twelve crowns of gold, wherewith, anciently, upon certain festivals in the year, twelve women of the city were crowned; and being styled and attended as queens,

[1] Agostino Barbarigo, elected doge in 1486, held the office for fifteen years.

they passed in great pomp and solemnity through all the churches and islands. . . . There is also a great store of rich ornaments for the church, with several fair pieces of gold, many fine amethysts and agates, and some small emeralds. But this is not a treasure of equal value with ready money, and, indeed, they have not much of that kind of treasure; for the doge told me in the senate-house that it is a capital crime among them to suggest collecting a treasure of that nature; and they are right, for it might cause dissension among them.

After they had shown me their treasure, I was carried to see their arsenal, where their galleys are equipped and all things necessary provided for their navy. The Venetian navy is, perhaps, even now the finest in the world, and was formerly under better order and regulation. . . .

71. Savonarola[1]

The *Memoirs* of Commines contains a very interesting account of the Italian preacher and martyr, Girolamo Savonarola. He belonged to the Dominican order of friars, and during the years 1490–1498 stirred all Florence by his fiery preaching. Savonarola began as a religious reformer and directed his attacks against the sins of the Florentines. His influence soon became very great, and before long this plain, earnest, God-fearing monk was the real head of the state and dictator of Florence. Commines made his acquaintance in 1495.

I had almost forgotten to mention that while I was at Florence I went to pay a visit to a certain friar called Girolamo, who, by report, was a very holy man, and had lived in a reformed convent fifteen years. . . . The occasion of my going to visit him was that he had always, both in the pulpit and elsewhere, spoken much in the favor of the French king,[2] and his words had kept the Florentines from confederating against us; for never had any preacher so much authority in a city. Whatever had been said or written to the contrary, he always affirmed that our king would come into Italy, saying that he was sent by God to chastise the tyranny of the princes, and that none

[1] Commines, *Mémoires*, bk. viii, ch. 3. [2] Charles VIII.

would be able to oppose him. He foretold likewise that the king would come to Pisa and enter it, and that the state of Florence would be dissolved on that day. And so it fell out; for Pietro de' Medici was driven out that very day. Many other things he predicted long before they came to pass: as, for instance, the death of Lorenzo de' Medici;[1] and he openly declared that he knew it by revelation. He likewise predicted that the reformation of the Church would be owing to the sword. This is not yet accomplished; but it very nearly occurred, and he still maintains that it will come to pass.

Many persons blamed him for pretending to receive divine revelations, but others believed him; for my part I think him a good man. I asked him whether our king would return safe into France, considering the great preparations of the Venetians against him, of which he gave a better account than I could, though I had lately come from Venice. He told me the king would meet with difficulties by the way, but he would overcome them all with honor, though he had but a hundred men in his company; for God, who had conducted him thither, would guard him back again. But because he had not applied himself, as he ought, to the reformation of the Church, and because he had permitted his soldiers to rob and plunder the poor people (as well those who had freely opened their gates to him as the enemy who had opposed him), therefore God had pronounced judgment against him, and in a short time he would receive chastisement.

However, he bade me tell him that if he would have compassion upon the people, and order his soldiers to do them no wrong and punish them when they did, as it was his business to do, God would then mitigate, if not revoke, his sentence; but that it would not be sufficient for him to plead that he did them no wrong himself. He also said that he would meet the king when he came, and tell him so from his own mouth; and this he did, and pressed hard for the restitution of the Florentine

[1] Lorenzo de' Medici, despot of Florence, died in 149?. He was succeeded by his son, Pietro de' Medici, who ruled for only two years.

towns. When he mentioned the sentence of God against him, the death of the Dauphin [1] came very fresh into my mind; for I knew nothing else that could touch the king so sensibly. This I have thought fit to record, to make it the more manifest that this whole expedition was a mystery conducted by God Himself.

72. Death of Savonarola [2]

In my relation of the affairs of Italy, I have mentioned a Dominican friar who lived at Florence for the space of fifteen years, in great reputation for the sancity of his life, and whom I saw and conversed with in the year 1495. His name was Girolamo, and he had foretold several things which afterwards came to pass. He had always affirmed that the king of France would make a journey into Italy, declaring it publicly in his sermons, and asserting that he knew it as a revelation from God, by whom he pronounced our king to have been chosen to reform the Church by the sword and to chastise the insolence of tyrants. But his pretending to receive revelations created for him many enemies, made him incur the displeasure of the pope,[3] and gained him ill-will from several in Florence. His life and discourses (as far as could be discovered) were the severest and most holy in the world, for he was declaiming perpetually against sin and making many proselytes in that city.

In the same year 1498, and within four or five days after the death of King Charles VIII, died Friar Girolamo also. I mention these facts together, because he had always publicly asserted that the king would return again into Italy, to accomplish the commission which God had given him for the reforming of the Church by the sword, and the expulsion of tryants out of Italy; and that in case the king refused or neglected it, God would punish him severely. . . . His threats to the king of God's severe anger if he did not return to Italy, he wrote several times to his majesty a little before his death;

[1] Charles Orlando, the eldest son of Charles VIII, died in 1495, when only three years of age.

[2] Commines, *Mémoires*, bk. viii, ch. 26.

[3] Alexander VI.

and he told me as much on my return from Italy, assuring me that sentence was pronounced in heaven against the king, provided he refused to observe what God had commanded and did not keep his soldiers from plundering.

About the time of the king's death there were great divisions among the Florentines. Some expected the king's return and very earnestly desired it, upon confidence in Friar Girolamo's assurance; and in that confidence they exhausted and ruined themselves in their expenses to promote the recovery of Pisa and the rest of the towns which they had delivered to the king; but Pisa remained in possession of the Venetians. Some of the citizens were for siding with the league and deserting our king; and these alleged that all was but folly and delusion, and that Friar Girolamo was a heretic and a hypocrite, and that he ought to be put into a sack and thrown into the river; but he had friends in the town who protected him against that fate. The pope and the duke of Milan wrote often against him, assuring the Florentines that Pisa and the rest of their towns should be restored, if they would abandon our king and punish Friar Girolamo. It accidentally happened that at the time of the king's death the Signory [1] consisted chiefly of Friar Girolamo's enemies (for the Signory in that city is changed every two months). They incited a Franciscan friar to quarrel with him and to proclaim him a heretic and an abuser of the people, in pretending to revelation, and to declare publicly that he had no such gift. To prove what he said, the Franciscan challenged Friar Girolamo to the ordeal of fire before the Signory.

Friar Girolamo had more wisdom than to accept this challenge; but one of his brethren offered to do it for him, and another of the Franciscans volunteered to do as much on the other side; so that a day was appointed when they were to come to their trial. Both of them presented themselves to enter the fire accompanied by all the friars of their orders. The Dominican brought the Host in his hand, which the Si-

[1] The governing body of Florence.

gnory and Franciscans insisted he should put aside; but the Dominican, being obstinate to the contrary and resolved not to part with it, they all returned to their convents. Whereupon the people, encouraged by Friar Girolamo's enemies and authorized by the Signory, went to his convent and fetched him and two more of his brethren out, and tortured them most cruelly. . . . The pope sent them power and commission to make out process against him, and at last he and his two brethren were burnt.[1]

The charge against him consisted only of two articles: that he created disorder in the city; and that he was an impostor. . . . For my own part I will neither condemn nor excuse him, nor will I say they did ill or well in putting him to death; but I am sure he foretold several things which afterwards came to pass and which all his friends in Florence could never have suggested. And as to our master and the evils with which he threatened him, they happened exactly as you have heard: first, the death of the Dauphin, and then his own death; predictions of which I have seen in letters under Friar Girolamo's own hand to the king.

[1] May 23, 1498.

CHAPTER XVII

MEDIEVAL TALES[1]

THE *Gesta Romanorum*, the most popular story book of the Middle Ages, is a Latin collection of short, pithy tales probably compiled toward the end of the thirteenth century. Perhaps the collection began as a series of narratives from Roman history, but, if so, it was soon enlarged with stories derived from Oriental and other sources. The work owes its name, *Deeds of the Romans*, to the fact that every narrative in the original compilation is assigned to some emperor who had or had not reigned in Rome. Nothing at all is known as to the authorship of the book; we are not even sure whether it originated in Germany, France, or England. These tales were intended to be used by preachers to enforce and enliven their sermons from the pulpit. Each story, accordingly, concluded with an "Application" or "Moral." It must be admitted that the author or authors often displayed considerable ingenuity in extracting moral lessons from stories of the most fanciful sort. The *Gesta Romanorum* has a certain literary interest as the source from which such writers as Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Schiller drew materials for their own compositions.

73. Dead Alexander[2]

We read that at the death of Alexander a golden sepulcher was constructed, and that a number of philosophers assembled

[1] *Gesta Romanorum*, translated by Charles Swan, revised by Wynnard Hooper. London, 1877. George Bell and Sons.

[2] *Gesta Romanorum*, No. 31.

around it. One said, "Yesterday, Alexander made a treasure of gold; to-day, gold makes a treasure of him." Another observed, "Yesterday, the whole world was not enough to satisfy his ambition; to-day, three or four ells of cloth are more than sufficient." A third said, "Yesterday, Alexander commanded the people; to-day, the people command him." Another said, "Yesterday, Alexander could enfranchise thousands; to-day, he cannot free himself from the bonds of death." Another remarked, "Yesterday, he pressed the earth; to-day, it oppresses him." "Yesterday," continued another, "all men feared Alexander; to-day, men consider him nothing." Another said, "Yesterday, Alexander had a multitude of friends; to-day, not one." Another said, "Yesterday, Alexander led on an army; to-day, that army bears him to the grave."

Application. — My beloved, anyone may be called Alexander who is rich and worldly minded; and to him may the observations of the philosophers be truly applied.

74. The Eight Pennies [1]

When Titus was emperor of Rome, he made a decree that the natal day of his first-born son should be held sacred, and that whosoever violated it by any kind of labor should be put to death. Then he called Vergil [2] to him and said, "Good friend, I have made a certain law; I desire you to frame some curious piece of art which may reveal to me every transgressor of the law." Vergil constructed a magic statue and caused it to be set up in the midst of the city. By virtue of the secret powers with which it was invested, it told the emperor whatever was done amiss. And thus by the accusation of the statue an infinite number of persons were convicted and punished.

Now there was a certain carpenter, called Focus, who pursued his occupation every day alike. Once, as he lay in bed,

[1] *Gesta Romanorum*, No. 57.

[2] The Roman poet Vergil during medieval times was popularly reputed to have been a magician possessed of marvelous powers.

his thoughts turned upon the accusations of the statue, and the multitudes which it had caused to perish. In the morning he clothed himself and proceeded to the statue, which he addressed in the following manner: "O statue! statue! because of thy informations many of our citizens have been taken and slain. I vow to my God, that if thou accusest me, I will break thy head." Having so said, he returned home.

About the first hour, the emperor, as he was wont, sent messengers to the statue to inquire if the edict had been strictly complied with. After they had arrived and had delivered the emperor's message, the statue exclaimed, "Friends, look up; what see ye written upon my forehead?" They looked, and beheld three sentences which ran thus: "Times are altered. Men grow worse. He who speaks truth has his head broken." "Go," said the statue, "declare to his majesty what you have seen and read." The messengers obeyed and detailed the circumstances as they had happened.

The emperor therefore commanded his guard to arm and march to the place on which the statue was erected; and he further ordered that if anyone presumed to molest it, the offender should be bound hand and foot and dragged into his presence.

The soldiers approached the statue and said, "Our emperor wills you to declare the name of the scoundrel who threatens you."

The statue made answer, "It is Focus the carpenter. Every day he violates the law, and, moreover, menaces me with a broken head if I expose him."

Focus was immediately apprehended and conducted to the emperor, who said, "Friend, what do I hear of thee? Why hast thou broken my law?"

"My lord," answered Focus, "I cannot keep it; for I am obliged to obtain every day eight pennies, which, without incessant work, I have not the means of getting."

"And why eight pennies?" said the emperor.

"Every day through the year," returned the carpenter, "I

am bound to repay two pennies which I borrowed in my youth; two I lend; two I lose; and two I spend."

"For what reason do you this?" asked the emperor.

"My lord," he replied, "listen to me. I am bound each day to repay two pennies to my father; for, when I was a boy, my father expended upon me daily the like sum. Now he is poor and needs my assistance, and therefore I return what I borrowed formerly. Two other pennies I lend to my son, who is pursuing his studies; in order that, if by any chance I should fall into poverty, he may restore the loan, just as I have done to his grandfather. Again, I lose two pennies every day on my wife; for she is contentious, wilful, and passionate. Now, because of this disposition, I account whatsoever is given to her entirely lost. Lastly, two other pennies I expend upon myself in meat and drink. I cannot do with less, nor can I earn them without unremitting labor. You now know the truth; and, I pray you, judge fairly and truly."

"Friend," said the emperor, "thou hast answered well. Go, and labor earnestly in thy calling."

Soon after this the emperor died, and Focus the carpenter, on account of his singular wisdom, was elected in his stead by the unanimous choice of the whole nation. He governed as wisely as he had lived; and at his death, his picture, bearing on the head eight pennies, was placed among the effigies of the deceased emperors.

Application. — My beloved, the emperor is God, who appointed Sunday as a day of rest. By Vergil is typified the Holy Spirit, which ordains a preacher to declare men's virtues and vices. Focus is any good Christian who labors diligently in his vocation and performs faithfully every duty.

75. The Three Truths [1]

A certain king, named Asmodeus, established an ordinance by which every malefactor taken and brought before the judge

[1] *Gesta Romanorum*, No. 58.

should distinctly declare three truths, against which no exception could be taken, or else be hanged. If, however, he did this, his life and property should be safe. It chanced that a certain soldier transgressed the law and fled. He hid himself in a forest and there committed many atrocities, despoiling and slaying whomsoever he could lay his hands upon. When the judge of the district ascertained his haunt, he ordered the forest to be surrounded and the soldier to be seized and brought bound to the seat of judgment.

"You know the law," said the judge.

"I do," returned the other. "If I declare three unquestionable truths I shall be free; but if not, I must die."

"True," replied the judge; "take then advantage of the law's clemency, or undergo the punishment it awards without delay."

"Cause silence to be kept," said the soldier undauntedly.

His wish being complied with, he proceeded in the following manner: "The first truth is this. I protest before ye all that, from my youth up, I have been a bad man."

The judge, hearing this, said to the bystanders, "He says true?" They answered, "Else he had not now been in this situation." "Go on, then," said the judge. "What is the second truth?"

"I like not," exclaimed he, "the dangerous situation in which I stand."

"Certainly," said the judge, "we may credit thee. Now then for the third truth, and thou hast saved thy life."

"Why," he replied, "if I once get out of this confounded place, I will never willingly reënter it."

"Amen," said the judge, "thy wit hath preserved thee; go in peace." And thus he was saved.

Application. — My beloved, the king is Christ. The soldier is any sinner; the judge is a wise confessor. If the sinner confesses the truth in such a manner as not even demons can object to, he shall be saved — that is, if he confesses and repents.

76. The Hermit [1]

There once lived a hermit, who in a remote cave passed day and night in God's service. Not far from his cell there was a flock kept by a shepherd, who one day fell into a deep sleep, when a robber, seeing him careless, carried off his sheep. When the keeper awoke, he began to swear in good set terms that he had lost his sheep; and where they were gone to he knew not. But the lord of the flock bade him be put to death. This gave to the hermit great offense. "O heaven," said he to himself, "seest thou this deed? The innocent suffers for the guilty: why permittest thou such things? If thus injustice triumphs, why do I remain here? I will again enter the world and do as other men do."

And so he left his hermitage and went again into the world; but God willed not that he should be lost: an angel in the form of a man was sent to join him. And so, crossing the hermit's path, he said to him, "Whither bound, my friend?" "I go," said he, "to yonder city." "I will go with you," replied the angel; "I am a messenger from heaven, come to be your companion on the way."

So they walked on together to the city. When they had entered, they begged a lodging during the night at the house of a certain soldier, who received them cheerfully and entertained them nobly. The soldier had an only and most dear son lying in the cradle. After supper, their bed-chamber was sumptuously adorned for them, and the angel and the hermit went to rest. But about the middle of the night the angel rose and strangled the sleeping infant. The hermit, horror-struck at what he witnessed, said within himself, "Never can this be an angel of God. The good soldier gave us everything that was necessary; he had but this poor innocent child, and it is strangled." Yet the hermit was afraid to reprove the angel.

In the morning both went forward to another city, in which they were honorably entertained at the house of one of the

[1] *Gesta Romanorum*, No. 80.

inhabitants. This person had a rich gold cup, which he highly valued; and of which, during the night, the angel robbed him. But still the hermit held his peace, for great was his fear.

On the morrow they went forward; and as they walked they came to a certain river, over which was a bridge. They went on the bridge, and about midway a poor pilgrim met them. "My friend," said the angel to him, "show us the way to yonder city." The pilgrim turned and pointed with his finger to the road they were to take; but as he turned the angel seized him by the shoulders and hurled him into the stream below. At this the terror of the hermit became greater. "It is the Devil," he said to himself; "it is the Devil, and no good angel! What evil had the poor man done that he should be drowned?"

He would now have gladly gone alone; but was afraid to speak his mind. About the hour of vespers they came to a city, in which they again sought shelter for the night; but the master of the house where they applied sharply refused it. "For the love of heaven," said the angel, "give us shelter, lest we fall prey to the wolves." The man pointed to a sty. "That," said he, "has pigs in it; if it please you to lie there you may, but to no other place will I admit you." "If we can do no better," said the angel, "we must accept your ungracious offer." They did so; and next morning the angel called their host and said, "My friend, I give you this cup"; and he gave him the gold cup he had stolen. The hermit, more and more amazed at what he saw, said to himself, "Now I am sure this is the Devil. The good man who received us with all kindness he despoiled, and now he gives the plunder to this fellow who refused us a lodging."

Turning therefore to the angel, he cried, "I will travel with you no more. I commend you to God." "Dear friend," the angel said, "first hear me and then go thy way."

The Explanation. — "When thou wert in thy hermitage, the owner of the flock unjustly put to death his servant. True it is he died innocent, and therefore was in a fit state to enter another world. God permitted him to be slain, foreseeing

that, if he lived, he would commit a sin and die before repentance followed. But the guilty man who stole the sheep will suffer eternally; while the owner of the flock, by alms and good works, will make amends for the sin which he committed. As for the son of the hospitable soldier whom I strangled in the cradle, know that before the boy was born his father did numerous works of charity and mercy; but afterwards grew parsimonious and covetous in order to enrich the child, of whom he was inordinately fond. This was the cause of its death; and now its distressed parent is again become a devout Christian. Then for the cup which I purloined from him who received us so kindly, know that before the cup was made, there was not a more abstemious person in the world; but afterwards he took such pleasure in it, and drank from it so often, that he was intoxicated twice or thrice during the day. I took away the cup, and he has returned to his former sobriety. Again, I cast the pilgrim into the river; and know that he whom I drowned was a good Christian, but had he proceeded much further, he would have fallen into a mortal sin. Now he is saved, and dwells in celestial glory. As for my bestowing the cup upon the inhospitable citizen, know nothing is done without reason. He suffered us to occupy the swinehouse and I gave him a valuable consideration. But he will, hereafter, abide in hell. Put a guard, therefore, on thy lips, and detract not from the Almighty. For he knoweth all things."

The hermit, hearing this, fell at the feet of the angel and entreated pardon. He returned to his hermitage and became a good and pious Christian.

77. The Laziest Son[1]

The emperor Pliny had three sons, to whom he was very indulgent. He wished to dispose of his kingdom, and calling the three into his presence, spoke thus, "The laziest of you shall reign after my death."

[1] *Gesta Romanorum*, No. 91.

"Then," answered the elder, "the kingdom must be mine; for I am so lazy that, sitting once by the fire, I burnt my legs, because I was too slothful to withdraw them."

The second son said, "The kingdom should properly be mine, for if I had a rope round my neck and held a sword in my hand, my idleness is such that I should not put forth my hand to cut the rope."

"But I," said the third son, "ought to be preferred to you both; for I am still more lazy. While I lay upon my bed, water dropped from above upon my eyes; and though, from the nature of the water, I was in danger of becoming blind, I neither could nor would turn my head ever so little to the right hand or to the left." The emperor, hearing this, bequeathed the kingdom to him, thinking him the laziest of the three.

Application: — My beloved, the emperor is the Devil; and the three sons are different classes of corrupt men.

78. The Basilisk [1]

Alexander the Great was lord of the whole world. He once collected a large army and besieged a certain city, around which many knights and others were killed without any visible wound. Much surprised at this, he called together his philosophers and said, "My masters, how is this? My soldiers die and there is no apparent wound!" "No wonder," replied they; "under the walls of the city is a basilisk,[2] whose look infects your soldiers, and they die of the pestilence it creates." "And what remedy is there for this?" said the king.

"Place a glass in a high place between the army and the wall under which the basilisk cowers; and no sooner shall he behold it than his own figure, reflected in the mirror, shall return the poison upon himself and kill him." Alexander took their advice and thus saved his followers.

[1] *Gesta Romanorum*, No. 140.

[2] The basilisk, according to the ancients, was a serpent or dragon whose breath, and even look, was fatal. The name of this fabulous monster is now applied to a species of harmless lizards.

Application. — My beloved, look into the glass of reflection, and by remembrance of human frailty destroy the vices which time breeds.

79. The Tale of a Penny [1]

There was an emperor whose porter was very shrewd. He earnestly besought his master that he might have the custody of a city for a single month and receive, by way of tax, one penny from every crook-backed, one-eyed, scabby, leprous, or ruptured person. The emperor granted his request and confirmed the gift under his own seal.

Accordingly, the porter was installed in his office; and as the people entered the city he took note of their defects, and charged them in accordance with the grant. It happened that a hunch-backed fellow one day entered, and the porter made his demand. Hunch-back protested that he would pay nothing.

The porter immediately laid hands upon him and, accidentally raising his cap, discovered that he was one-eyed also. He demanded two pennies forthwith.

The other still more vehemently opposed and would have fled; but the porter pulled hunch-back's cap off and disclosed a bald scab; whereupon he required three pennies.

Hunch-back, very much enraged, persisted in his refusal and began to struggle with the porter. This caused an exposure of his arms, by which it became manifest that he was leprous. The fourth penny was therefore laid claim to; and the scuffle continuing, revealed a rupture, which made a fifth.

Thus, a fellow unjustly refusing to pay a rightful demand of one penny, was necessitated, much against his inclination, to pay five.

Application. — My beloved, the emperor is Christ. The porter is any prelate or discreet confessor; the city is the world. The diseased man is a sinner.

[1] *Gesta Romanorum*, No. 157.

CHAPTER XVIII

THREE MEDIEVAL EPICS [1]

FRANCE, England, and Germany are each fortunate in possessing an epic poem which celebrates its legendary heroes and at the same time furnishes an invaluable picture of departed ages. These three epics are the *Song of Roland*, *Beowulf*, and the *Nibelungenlied*. They seem to have taken shape out of minstrel songs, and for generations lived only on the lips of the people. Late in the Middle Ages they were committed to writing — and doubtless much altered in the process — by writers whose names are unknown. The poems differ greatly in literary power, and none of them as a work of art can be compared with the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*.

80. The Song of Roland [2]

The legend of Roland rests on authentic history. Einhard, in his *Life of Charlemagne*,[3] tells how that emperor invaded Spain in 778 and warred with the Moors. On Charlemagne's return to France through the passes of the Pyrenees, the rearguard of his army was ambushed by the mountaineers and entirely destroyed. Roland, count of Brittany, and many other notables were killed. The scene of the battle was fixed by tradition as the pass of Roncesvalles. The *Song of Roland* describes Roland as the nephew of Charlemagne and the most eminent of the twelve peers of France. Charlemagne is represented as having conquered all Spain, with the exception of Sara-

[1] *The Song of Roland*, translated by Jessie Crosland. London, 1907. Chatto and Windus. *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, translated by J. R. C. Hall. London, 1901. George Allen and Unwin. *The Fall of the Nibelungs*, translated by Margaret Armour. London, 1908. J. M. Dent and Sons.

[2] *Chanson de Roland*, ll. 520–578, 1412–1437, 1753–1806, 2297–2396.

[3] See page 9.

gossa, the seat of the Moorish king, Marsile. To Marsile now came Ganelon, whom the Frankish ruler had sent on an embassy to discuss terms of peace. Ganelon, inspired by hatred of Roland, agreed to betray him for ten mule-loads of gold.

Then said Marsile, "In truth I tell thee, Ganelon, that right willingly would I love thee and well it beseems us to be in friendly counsel. And now I wish greatly to hear thee speak of Charlemagne. Old he is and devoid of strength, for well I know that two hundred summers have passed over him.[1] Many are the lands through which his feet have borne him, and many a noble king has he brought to beggary. Now is it high time that he return to Aix[2] in France, that there he may take repose for awhile."

But Ganelon made answer, "By no means such a one is Charlemagne. Not a man is there that hath seen him or known him but full well he must confess that he hath seen a warrior. With very great virtue hath God endowed him. Who, indeed, can recount all his acts of valor? Far rather would I die than cease to be his baron."

Then spake the heathen again, "Much, indeed, it marvels me concerning Charlemagne, that old and hoary monarch. Full well I know that more than two hundred years have passed over him. Through many lands have his feet carried him, and many are the blows of lance and spear which he hath given and the kings whom he hath brought to beggary. When will it come to pass that he grow weary of fighting?"

"That will not be," quoth Ganelon, "while his nephew Roland is still alive, for under the whole vault of heaven is no such warrior as he. Exceeding valiant, too, is his comrade Oliver, and the twelve peers, whom the king so much cherishes, are but the leaders of twenty thousand noble Frenchmen. So secure is Charlemagne that he knows not fear, and great would be his anguish should his knights receive dishonor.

[1] Charlemagne, born about 742, was in reality a young man at the time of his invasion of Spain.

[2] Aix-la-Chapelle, or Aachen.

Then, indeed, would his right arm be smitten, and no longer would he be a valiant warrior."

"Sir Ganelon," quoth Marsile, "I too have an army, and a finer hast thou never seen. Four hundred thousand knights are ever ready at my call, and can I not therewith make a stand against the Frenchmen?" And Ganelon made answer, "Not this time shalt thou conquer. Exceeding great shall be the loss of thy barons, if now thou shalt not submit thee to the law of the Christians. Leave now thy folly and abide fast by wisdom; then shall the emperor give thee many gifts, so that all those who hear it shall marvel. Nought hast thou to do but to send thither twenty hostages; then will the king forthwith retire to France, and only a rearguard shall he leave in Spain behind him. And here I doubt not will be left Count Roland, and with him his comrade Oliver, the courteous and valiant. Dead are both the counts if thou but trust my words, and therewith is the king's pride fallen, and never more shall he desire to come up against thee."

All things came out as the treacherous Ganelon had planned. Roland, at Ganelon's instigation, was placed in command of the rearguard. With him were Oliver and the other peers, and the flower of the French army. The Franks had nearly reached the summit of the pass when the Moors, four hundred thousand strong, descended on them. Oliver begged Roland to sound his horn and summon Charlemagne, but Roland, contemptuous of the foe, refused to do so.

Marvelous was the battle and fearful to behold, and wonderful were the blows of Roland and Oliver. And the good Archbishop Turpin rendered many blows, and the twelve peers were foremost in the fray. And all the men of France struck as a single man, till the heathen lay dead in heaps around them. . . . Many a trusty lance of keenest edge have they left upon the field, and shattered all to fragments are the blades of their broadswords. Alas! how many a valiant warrior has perished — never more shall he behold his father, nor his kinsmen, nor Charlemagne, the noble king who awaits them on the borders. But all the while in France there is marvelous disorder. Tem-

pests of wind mingled with storms of rain and hail such as no man had ever witnessed, and fearful bolts of thunder rushed without ceasing downwards. There, too, in very truth was the earth all cleft asunder; from St. Michel to Xanten, from Besançon to Wissant, there was not a dwelling but the walls thereof were shaken. And at midday there was very great darkness over all the land, and unless the heavens were rent, there might not a ray of light be seen. Not a living being but was sore affrighted, and many said, "Of a certainty the end of the world is come, and the consummation of all things is at hand." Little they knew it was the mourning for the death of Roland.

The Franks under Roland's leadership, performed prodigies of valor. They were reduced to sixty men before the hero consented to sound his horn.

And straightway has he raised the horn to his mouth. Firmly has he grasped it and sounded it with vigor. Lofty are the hills and very loud the echo, and the sound can be heard full fifteen leagues away. And Charlemagne has heard it, and all his host of vassals, and the king spake, "Our men are giving battle." But Ganelon said, "Had another man said this, it would have seemed a fearful falsehood."

With pain and in sore torment has Roland sounded his horn, and the bright blood is streaming from his mouth, and both his temples has he broken in the endeavor. But exceeding great and loud is the noise, and Charlemagne has heard it as he passed across the border; and now the Frenchmen listen. Then spake the king, "I hear the horn of Roland; and never would he blow it unless in conflict." But Ganelon made answer, "Of battle is there nought. Old thou art, and white, and hoary, and by thy words thou makest thyself like to a child. For well indeed thou knowest the pride of Roland, and wonder is it in truth that God has suffered it so long. . . . Verily for a hare would he sound his horn all day, and even now, I wager, he is joking with his peers. And who, O king, on all

this earth would dare to challenge him? Fare onward then in safety, and tarry no longer, for it will be long yet ere we reach the land of France."

Now is Count Roland all bleeding at the mouth, and his temples broken with the sounding of his horn. But Charlemagne has heard and all his host of Frenchmen. "Very long must be the breath of that horn," quoth Charlemagne, and Naimes, duke of Bavaria, made answer, "Verily in pain must be the baron who sounds it, and right well I know that battle is waging. And the traitor knows it, who would dissuade thee from going. Now don thine armor, and cry thy note of battle, and quickly bring help to the noblest of thy vassals. For well mayst thou hear that Roland is sore beset."

Now has the king bidden that the trumpets be sounded, and the Frenchmen have dismounted and donned their hauberks, their helmets, and their golden swords. Fair are their shields and their lances long and well proven, and the pennons are blue and white and vermilion. And now once more they mount their steeds, and right swiftly they spur them till they have crossed the passes. And not a man there was but said to his neighbor, "Could we but see Roland before the heathen slay him, exceeding grievous blows would we deal at his side." But in vain they spake, for too long have they tarried.

At last the Moors, warned of the return of Charlemagne, retreated. They left Roland, alone and mortally wounded, on the field of battle.

Roland felt already that death was upon him, and he rose to his feet, and very great was the effort he made. And all the color departed from his face, but he still held in his hand his naked sword, Durendal. And there before him was a dark rock, and ten times he struck upon it in anger and in grief. And the steel but grated on it, nor did it break or splinter. Then quoth the count, "Alas! holy Mary, come hither to my aid! My good sword, Durendal, how do I regret thee. When I am dead I shall need thee no longer. Many are the battles that I have won through thee, and many the broad lands which

I have conquered for the hoary-headed king. May no man ever own thee who would flee his fellow! Never in my life have I been parted from thee, and a right good vassal has thine owner ever been. Never will be such another in the free land of France."

Then did Roland strike once more upon the stonework of sardonyx, and the steel but grated, and neither broke nor splintered. And now, when he saw that he certainly could not break it, thus within himself did he begin to lament, "Ah, Durendal of mine, how fair thou art and glistening! How thou gleamest in the sunlight and throwest back its rays. . . . Many are the lands and countries that I have conquered with Durendal for my hoary-bearded master, and exceeding great is the grief and anguish that I feel for this sword; far rather would I perish than that it should fall into the hands of the heathen. May the God of glory grant that France shall never be thus dishonored."

Then did Roland strike for the third time upon a rock of gloomy hue, and beyond the power of words was the havoc that he wrought therein. Yet did the steel but grate, and neither broke nor splintered; and back again it sprang right up toward the heaven. And when now the count perceived that he should never break it, softly within himself did he begin to lament over it. "Ah, Durendal of mine, how good thou art and holy! Within thy golden pommel there are many relics. There is St. Peter's tooth and the blood of St. Basil; there are the hairs of my lord, St. Denis, and the garments of holy Mary. In truth it is not right that the heathen should possess thee. Never shouldst thou be wielded but by the hands of Christians. Many are the battles and the lands that I have won with thee for Charlemagne, the waving-bearded, and richer and more powerful is the king become thereby. Never shalt thou be borne by a man that is a coward. May God grant that France may never be thus dishonored."

And when Roland felt that death had really seized upon him, and that it had traveled downwards from his head and

reached his very heart, then did he hastily betake himself beneath a pine tree, and he laid him on his face, and beneath him he placed both his horn and his broadsword. Toward the land of Spain he turned his face, so that Charlemagne and all his army might perceive that he died as a valiant vassal, with his face toward the foe. Then did he confess himself right zealously and held forth his glove toward heaven for his transgressions.

So Roland perceived that his life was ended in very deed. And there as he lay upon the summit of a hill, looking over the land of Spain, he beat his hand upon his breast, and thus he spake, "Ah, God! grant me thy pardon for the sake of thy great mercy! Absolve my sins, both small and great, which I have ever committed from the hour that I was born till this day on which I perish." And he extended his right glove toward the God of heaven. And lo, the angels from heaven descended to where he lay.

And as he lay beneath the pine tree with his countenance toward the land of Spain, many things came back to his remembrance. He bethought him of the many lands which he had conquered; of the fair land of France and his many kinsmen there; and of Charlemagne, his lord, who had trained him from his youth; and of all the men of France who trusted in his valor. And he could not stir but the tears flowed from his eyelids, and deeply did he sigh within himself. But ever he bethought himself of his need, and confessed his sins, nor did he cease to pray God for his mercy. And thus he spake again, "O holy Father, who speakest nought but truth, thou didst raise Lazarus from the dead and rescue Daniel from the jaws of lions. Save now my soul, I pray thee, from all the dangers which my transgressions have brought upon me." And his right glove he held ever extended toward heaven, and the angel Gabriel received it from his hand. Beneath his arm he held his trusty helmet, and with clasped hands has he met his end at last. For God sent down his cherubim and St. Michael of the Seas, and together with them came the holy

angel Gabriel, and straightway they bore the soul of the count to paradise.

The *Song of Roland* ends with a description of the return of the Franks, the rout of the Moors, the burial of the peers who fell at Roncesvalles, and the trial and execution of Ganelon.

81. Beowulf [1]

The epic of *Beowulf* deals with the exploits of the hero of that name. He is represented as the nephew of Hygelac, king of the Geatas, a people who lived in southern Sweden. With twelve companions Beowulf sailed to Denmark, for the pupose of aiding its king, Hrothgar, whose hall (called Heorot) for twelve years had been ravaged by the man-eating monster, Grendel.

"Hail to thee, Hrothgar! I am Hygelac's kinsman and war-thane. I have in my youth undertaken many deeds of daring. Grendel's doings became plainly known to me in my fatherland. Seafarers say that this hall, this most noble building, stands empty and useless to every man after the evening light has become hidden under the vault of heaven. Then my people, the best folk, wise men, advised me to visit thee, because they knew the greatness of my power. They had themselves observed how I bound five of my foes, laid low a brood of giants, and slew by night sea-monsters on the waves; I suffered dire extremity, and avenged the attacks upon the Geatas — disasters had befallen them — I ground down their oppressors. And now I will decide the matter alone against the wretch, the giant Grendel!

"Now therefore I will beg of thee one boon, thou ruler of the glorious Danes. Do not refuse me this, now I am come so far — that I alone, with my band of noble warriors, this troop of hardy men, may purge Heorot. Moreover, I have learned that in his rashness the monster recks not of weapons. Hence I shall not carry to the fray a sword, a shield, or a buckler, but with the fiend I shall close with grip of hand and fight to the death, foe against foe.

[1] *Beowulf*, ll. 405–455, 710–852, 2712–2820.

"He whom death carries off shall rest assured it is God's will. I doubt not that if Grendel wins the combat he will eat fearlessly the Geatish folk in the war-hall, as he has often eaten the Danes. Thou wilt have no need to cover my head, for he will have me, blood-bespattered, if death seizes me. He will bear off the bloody corpse, will set his mind upon devouring it. The lonely one will feast unpityingly, and stain his swamp-lair; no longer wilt thou need to care about my body's sustenance. If battle takes me, do thou send Hygelac this best of armor, most excellent of corselets, which protects my breast.

Hrothgar accepted Beowulf's offer of aid and feasted him and his men in the long-deserted Heorot. At night the Danes withdrew, leaving the strangers alone in the hall. When all but Beowulf were asleep, Grendel made his appearance.

Then came Grendel, advancing from the moor under the misty slopes; God's anger rested on him. The deadly foe thought to entrap one of the human race in the high hall; he strode beneath the clouds in such wise that he might best discern the wine-building, the gold-chamber of men, plated over with decorations. Nor was that the first time that he had visited Hrothgar's home. Never in the days of his life, before or since, did he discover a braver warrior and hall-guards. So this creature, deprived of joys, came journeying to the hall. The door, fastened by forged bands, opened straightway, when he touched it with his hands. Thus, bent on destruction, for he was swollen with rage, he burst open the entrance of the building.

Quickly the fiend trod in on the shining floor, advanced in angry mood; out of his eyes there started a weird light, most like a flame. He saw many men in the hall, a troop of kinsmen, a band of warriors, sleeping all together. Then his spirit exulted; he, the cruel monster, resolved that he would sever the soul of every one of them from his body before day came; for the hope of feasting full had come to him. But it was no longer his fortune that he should devour more of the human

race after that night. The mighty Beowulf kept watching how the murderous foe would set to work with his sudden snatchings. The monster was not minded to delay, but quickly grasped a sleeping warrior as a first start, rent him undisturbed, bit his bony frame, drank blood in streams, swallowed bite after bite, and soon he had eaten up all of the dead man, even his feet and hands.

Forward and nearer he advanced, and then seized with his hands the doughty warrior — the fiend reached out toward him with his claw. Beowulf at once took in his evil plans, and came down on Grendel's arm. Instantly the master of crimes realized that never had he met with a mightier hand-grip in any other man. He became affrighted in soul and spirit, but he could get away no faster for all that. His mind was bent on getting off, he wished to flee into the darkness and go back to the herd of devils. His case was unlike anything he had met with in his lifetime there before. Then Hygelac's brave kinsman was mindful of his evening speech; he stood erect and grasped Grendel tight, so that his fingers cracked. The monster was moving out; Beowulf stepped forward, too. The infamous creature thought to slip farther off, wheresoever he could, and to flee away thence to his fen-refuge; he knew the power of his fingers was in the foeman's grip. That was a dire journey which the baleful fiend had made to Heorot!

The splendid hall resounded, there was panic among all the Danes, the castle-dwellers, and among the heroes and the nobles. Both the mighty wardens were furious; the building rang again. Then was it a great wonder that the wine-hall was proof against the savage fighters; that the fair earthly dwelling did not fall to the ground; yet it was made firm enough for it, inside and out, by means of iron clamps, forged with curious art. There, where the foemen fought, many a mead-bench adorned with gilding, started from the sill. The wise ones among the Danes never thought that any man could shatter it by strength or loosen it by craft, although the embrace of fire might swallow it in smoke. . . . There many a noble of Beo-

wulf's company brandished an old ancestral weapon — they wished to protect the life of their lord, if so they might. They did not know, brave men of war, when they took part in the contest, and thought to hew Grendel on every side and hunt out his life, that no battle-bill on earth, no best of swords, could get at the foe, because he used enchantment against conquering weapons, every sort of blades.

Woeful was his last end to be in this life's day and his outlawed ghost was to journey far into the power of fiends. Then he who of yore had in wantonness of soul done many outrages to mankind, he, the rebel against God, discovered that his bodily frame was no help to him, but that the bold kinsman of Hygelac had him by the hands. While he lived, each was abhorrent to the other. The horrible wretch suffered deadly hurt, on his shoulder gaped a wound past remedy, the sinews sprang asunder, the fleshy covering burst. Glory in fight was granted to Beowulf; Grendel, sick unto death, must needs flee thence to the fen-fastnesses and seek out his joyless dwelling. He knew too well that the end of his life had come, the measure of his days. After that bloody contest, the desire of all the Danes had come to pass!

In such wise did he who first came from far, the wise and brave, purge Hrothgar's hall and free it from attack. He rejoiced in his night's work, in his heroic deeds. The chief of the Geatish men had made good his boast to the Danes, and removed besides all the trouble, the carking care, which erewhile they had endured, and had to undergo from dire compulsion, no small humiliation. That was clear evidence, when the brave warrior deposited by the spacious roof the hand, the arm and shoulder — there was Grendel's clutching-limb all complete!

In the morning there was many a warrior gathered round the mead-hall, for chiefs of the folk came from far and near along the highways to see the marvel, the traces of the monster. His parting from life did not seem a cause for sorrow to any of the men who saw the trail of the inglorious one, how he,

weary in spirit and vanquished in the fight, made tracks for his life, death-doomed and fugitive, to the lake of the water-demons. The water boiled with blood, the frightful surge of the waves welled up, all mingled with hot gore the death-doomed dyed it, and then, deprived of joys, he laid life down, his heathen soul in the fen-refuge; there hell received him!

After the destruction of Grendel the monster's mother invaded the hall and carried off one of the Danish nobles. But Beowulf, nothing daunted, pursued her beneath the waves and killed her. Richly rewarded by Hrothgar, Beowulf now returned to his native land. He became king of the Geatas and ruled prosperously for fifty years. At the end of this period his country was ravaged by a fiery dragon. The aged king, with the help of a single follower, slew the dragon, but received his own death-wound.

The wound which the dragon had inflicted on him began to burn and swell; quickly he found out that deadly venom seethed within his breast. But the chieftain went on until he sat, still clear in mind, on a seat by the rampart, and gazed on the work of giants — how the primeval earth dwelling contained within it rocky arches, firm on columns. Then the thane, his follower, bathed the bloody wounds of the famous prince and undid his helmet.

Beowulf, despite his grievous wound, broke forth in speech. He knew full well that he had spent his measured while of earthly joy, then was his count of days all passed away, and death incalculably near: "Now should I have wished to give my son my armor, if it had been so ordained that any heir, belonging to my body, should come after me. I have ruled over this people fifty winters; there was not one of the neighboring kings who dared encounter me with his allies in battle or could weigh me down with fear. In my own home I awaited what the times destined for me, kept well my own, did not pick treacherous quarrels, nor have I sworn unjustly many oaths. In all this may I, sick with deadly wounds, have solace; because the Ruler of men may never charge me with the murder of kinsfolk, when my life parts from my body. . . .

"Bid ye war-veterans raise a conspicuous mound after the funeral fire, on a projection by the sea, which shall tower high as a memorial for my people, so that seafarers who urge their tall ships over the spray of ocean shall thereafter call it Beowulf's mound."

The brave-souled prince then undid from his neck the golden collar, gave it to the thane, the young warrior, and his gold-mounted helmet, ring and corselet, and bade him use them well. "Thou art the last of our race," he said. "Fate has swept all my kinsfolk off, undaunted nobles, to their doom. I must go after them." That was the last thought of the old king's heart before the funeral fire was his lot, the hot destructive flames. His soul departed from his body to find the reward of righteous men."

82. The Nibelungenlied [1]

The story on which the *Nibelungenlied* is based was widespread among Teutonic peoples. It is touched upon in *Beowulf* and is fully developed in the *Prose Edda*, one of the most important literary productions of the Northmen. In the German form of the legend the song of the Nibelungs becomes a story of the love and vengeance of the beautiful Kriemhild, daughter of a Burgundian king.

There grew up in Burgundy a noble maiden, in no land was a fairer. Kriemhild was her name. Well favored was the damsel, and by reason of her died many warriors. Doughty knights in plenty wooed her, for she was exceeding comely, and her virtues were an adornment to all women.

Now it so happened that Kriemhild, the pure maid, dreamed that she trained a wild falcon, and eagles wrested it from her; the which to see grieved her more than any ill that had befallen her heretofore.

This dream she told to Uta, her mother, who interpreted it in this manner: "The falcon that thou sawest is a noble man; yet if God keep him not, he is a lost man to thee."

"What speakest thou to me of men, mother mine? Without

[1] *Nibelungenlied*, vv. 13–19, 86–100, 291–305, 916–925, 972–1001.

their love would I still abide, that I may remain fair till my death, nor suffer harm from any man's love."

Said her mother then, "Be not so sure; for wouldst thou ever on this earth have heart's gladness, it cometh from the love of a man. And a fair wife wilt thou be, if God but lead hither to thee a true and trusty knight."

"Say not so, mother mine," answered the maiden, "for to many a woman, and oft hath it been proven, the reward of love is sorrow. From both I will keep me, that evil betide not."

Long in such wise abode the high, pure maiden, nor thought to love any. Nevertheless, at the last, she wedded a brave man; that was the falcon she dreamed of erstwhile, as her mother foretold it. Yea, bitter was her vengeance on her kinsmen that slew him, and by reason of his death died many a mother's son.

The famous Siegfried, attracted by the fame of Kriemhild's beauty, came to Worms, the Burgundian capital. Kriemhild's brothers observed the arrival of Siegfried and his knights, and from their retainer, Hagen, learned who the hero was.

"From wheresoever they have come, they must be princes, or the envoys of princes. Their horses are good, and wondrously rich their vesture. . . . But for this I vouch, that, though I never saw Siegfried, yonder knight who goeth so proud is none but he. New adventures he bringeth hither. By this hero's hand fell the brave Nibelungs, Schilbung and Nibelung, the high princes. Wonders hath he wrought by his prowess. I have heard tell that, on a day when he rode alone, he came to a mountain and chanced on a company of brave men who guarded the Nibelung's hoard, whereof he knew naught. The Nibelung men had just brought it forth from a hole in the hill and, oddly enough, they were about to share it. Siegfried saw them and marveled thereat. He drew so close that they were aware of him, and he of them. Whereupon one said, 'Here cometh Siegfried, the hero of the Netherland!' Schilbung and Nibelung welcomed him, and with one accord the

princely youths asked him to divide the treasure between them, and begged this so eagerly that he could not say them nay.

"The tale goeth that he saw there more precious stones than a hundred double wagons had sufficed to carry, and of the red Nibelung gold yet more. This must bold Siegfried divide. In reward therefor they gave him the sword of the Nibelungs, and were ill paid by Siegfried for the service. He strove vainly to end the task, whereat they were wroth. And when he could not bear it through, the kings, with their men, fell upon him. But with their father's sword, that was called Balmung, he wrested from them both hoard and land. The princes had twelve champions — stark giants, yet little it availed them. Siegfried slew them wrathfully with his hand, and, with Balmung, vanquished seven hundred knights; and many youths there, afraid of the man and his sword, did homage for castles and land. He smote the two kings dead. Then he himself came in peril by Alberich, that would have avenged the death of his masters then and there, till that he felt Siegfried's exceeding might. When the dwarf could not overcome him, they ran like lions to the mountain, where Siegfried won from Alberich the cloud-cloak that was named Tarnkappe. Then was Siegfried, the terrible man, master of the hoard. They that had dared the combat lay slain; and he bade carry the treasure back whence the Nibelungs had brought it forth; and he made Alberich the keeper thereof, after that he had sworn an oath to serve him as his man and to do all that he commanded him."

"These are his deeds," said Hagen, "bolder knight there never was. Yet more I might tell of him. With his hand he slew a dragon and bathed in its blood, so that his skin is like horn, and no weapon can cut him, as has been proven on him ofttimes."

The meeting of Siegfried and Kriemhild is thus described.

She greeted him mild and maidenly, and her color was kindled when she saw before her the high-minded man, and she said, "Welcome, Sir Siegfried, noble knight and good." His courage

rose at her words, and graceful, as befitted a knight, he bowed himself before her and thanked her. And love that is mighty constrained them, and they yearned with their eyes in secret. I know not whether, from his great love, the youth pressed her white hand, but two love-desirous hearts, I think, had else done amiss.

Nevermore, in summer or in May, bore Siegfried in his heart such high joy, as when he went by the side of her whom he coveted for his dear one. And many a knight thought, would it had been my fortune to walk with her, as I have seen him do! Yet never, truly, hath warrior served better to win a queen. From what land soever the guests came, they were aware only of these two. And she was bidden kiss the hero. He had never had like joy before in this world. . . .

Then they ordered to make way for fair Kriemhild. Valiant knights in stately array escorted her to the church, where she was parted from Siegfried. She went thither, followed by her maidens; and so rich was her apparel that the other women, for all their striving, were as naught beside her, for to gladden the eyes of heroes she was born.

Scarce could Siegfried tarry till they had sung mass, he yearned so to thank her for his gladness, and that she whom he bore in his heart had inclined her desire toward him, even as his was to her, which was meet.

Now when Kriemhild had come forth to the front of the church, they bade the warrior go to her again, and the damsel began to thank him, that before all others he had done valiantly. And she said, "Now, God requite thee, Sir Siegfried, for they tell me thou hast won praise and honor from all knights."

He looked on the maid right sweetly, and he said, "I will not cease to serve them. Never, while I live, will I lay head on pillow, till I have brought their desire to pass. For love of thee, dear lady, I will do this." And every day of twelve, in the sight of all the people, the youth walked by the side of the maiden as she went to the court.

Siegfried and Kriemhild were married, but fate did not permit them to enjoy many years of happiness together. Kriemhild quarreled with Brunhild, the wife of her brother Gunther, and Gunther's follower, the " grim " Hagen, determined to make away with Siegfried. Having learned from Kriemhild that Siegfried was vulnerable in one spot, Hagen arranged a great hunt in the forest, in order to slay the hero when off his guard.

Gunther and Hāgen, the fierce warriors, went hunting with false intent in the forest, to chase the boar, the bear, and the wild bull with their sharp spears. What fitter sport for brave men? Siegfried rode with them in kingly pomp. They took with them good store of meats. By a cool stream he lost his life, as Brunhild, King Gunther's wife, had devised it.

But before he set out . . . he went to Kriemhild, who was most sorrowful of heart. He kissed his lady on the mouth. "God grant I may see thee safe and well again, and thou me. Bide here merry among thy kinsfolk, for I must forth."

Then she thought of the secret she had unwittingly revealed to Hagen, but durst not tell him. The queen wept sore that ever she was born, and made measureless sorrow. She said, "Go not hunting. Last night I dreamed an evil dream: how that two wild boars chased thee over the heath; and the flowers were red with blood. Have pity on my tears, for I fear some treachery. There are perhaps some people offended at us, who pursue us with deadly hate. Go not, dear lord; in good faith I counsel it."

But he answered, "Dear love, I go but for a few days. I know not any that beareth me hate. Thy kinsmen wish me well, nor have I deserved otherwise at their hand." "Nay, Siegfried, I fear some mischance. Last night I dreamed an evil dream: how that two mountains fell on thee, and I saw thee no more. If thou goest, thou wilt grieve me bitterly." But he caught his dear one in his arms and kissed her close; then he took leave of her and rode off. She never saw him alive again.

Then follows the powerful scene in which the murder of Siegfried is described.

Foully did Hagen break faith with Siegfried. He said, when they were starting for the broad lime tree, "I hear from all sides that none can keep pace with Kriemhild's husband when he runneth. Let us see now."

Bold Siegfried answered, "Thou mayst easily prove it, if thou wilt run with me to the brook for a wager. The praise shall be to him that reacheth there first." "Let us see then," said Hagen the knight. And Siegfried answered, "If I lose, I will lay me at thy feet in the grass." A glad man was King Gunther when he heard that!

Said Siegfried further, "Nay, I will undertake more. I will carry on me all that I wear — spear, shield, and hunting gear." Whereupon he girded on his sword and his quiver in haste. Then the others did off their clothes, till they stood in their white shirts, and they ran through the clover like two wild panthers; but bold Siegfried was seen there the first. Before all men he won the prize in everything. He loosed his sword straightway, and laid down his quiver. His good spear he leaned against the lime tree; then the noble guest stood and waited, for his courtesy was great. He laid down his shield by the stream. Albeit he was sore athirst, he drank not till the king had finished, who gave him evil thanks.

The stream was cool, pure, and good. Gunther bent down to the water and rose again when he had drunk. Siegfried had gladly done the like, but he suffered for his courtesy. Hagen carried his bow and his sword out of his reach, and sprang back and gripped the spear. Then he spied for the secret mark on his vesture; and, while Siegfried drank from the stream, Hagen stabbed him where the mark was, so that his heart's blood spurted out on the traitor's clothes. Never since hath knight done so wickedly. He left the spear sticking deep in his heart, and fled in grimmer haste than ever he had done from any man on this earth afore.

When Siegfried felt the deep wound, he sprang up maddened from the water, for the long boar spear stuck out from his heart. He thought to find bow or sword; if he had, Hagen had got his

due. But the sorely wounded man saw no sword, and had nothing save his shield. He picked it up from the water's edge and ran at Hagen. King Gunther's man could not escape him. For all that he was wounded to the death, he smote so mightily that the shield well-nigh brake, and the precious stones flew out. The noble guest had fain taken vengeance.

Hagen fell beneath his stroke. The meadow rang loud with the noise of the blow. If Siegfried had had his sword to hand, Hagen would have been a dead man. But the anguish of his wound constrained him. His color was wan; he could not stand upright; and the strength of his body failed him, for he bare death's mark on his white cheek. Fair women enough made dole for him.

Then Kriemhild's husband fell among the flowers. The blood flowed fast from his wound, and in his great anguish he began to upbraid those who had falsely contrived his death. "False cowards!" cried the dying knight. "What availeth all my service to you, since ye have slain me? I was true to you, and pay the price for it. Ye have done ill by your friends. Cursed by this deed are your sons yet unborn. Ye have avenged your spite on my body all too bitterly. For your crime ye shall be shunned by good knights."

All the warriors ran where he lay stabbed. To many among them it was a woeful day. They that were true mourned for him, for the hero that well deserved the praise of all men. The king of Burgundy, also, wept for his death, but the dying man said, "He needeth not to weep for the evil, by whom the evil cometh. Better had he left it undone, for great is his blame."

Then said grim Hagen, "I know not what ye rue. All is ended for us — care and trouble. Few are they now that will withstand us. Glad am I that, through me, his might is fallen." "Lightly mayst thou boast now," said Siegfried; "if I had known thy murderous hate, it had been an easy thing to guard my body from thee. My bitterest dole is for Kriemhild, my wife. God pity me that ever I had a son. For all men will

reproach him that he hath murderers for his kinsmen. I would grieve for that, had I the time."

He said to the king, "Never in this world was so foul a murder as thou hast done on me. In thy sore need I saved thy life and thine honor. Dear have I paid for that I did well by thee." With a groan the wounded man said further, "Yet if thou canst show truth to any on this earth, O king, show it to my dear wife, whom I commend to thee. Let it advantage her to be thy sister. By all princely honor stand by her. Long must my father and my knights wait for my coming. Never hath woman won such woe through a dear one." He writhed in his bitter anguish, and spake painfully, "Ye shall rue this foul deed in the days to come. Know this of a truth, that in slaying me ye have slain yourselves."

The flowers were all wet with blood. He strove with death, but not for long, for the weapon of death cut too deep. And the bold knight and good spake no more.

When the warriors saw that the hero was dead, they laid him on a shield of ruddy gold and took counsel how they should conceal that Hagen had done it. Many of them said, "Evil hath befallen us. Ye shall all hide it, and hold to one tale — when Kriemhild's husband was riding alone in the forest robbers slew him."

But Hagen said, "I will take him back to Burgundy. If she that hath troubled Brunhild know it, I care not. It concerneth me little if she weep."

The *Nibelungenlied* does not end with Siegfried's death. In later chapters we are told how Kriemhild, now become the wife of Etzel (Attila), king of the Huns, invited Gunther, Hagen, and their Burgundian followers to visit her in Hunland, and then took bloody vengeance on them for the murder of Siegfried. The poem concludes in a riot of bloodshed, for Kriemhild, after killing Hagen with Siegfried's sword, herself was slain.

CHAPTER XIX

A SCHOLAR OF THE RENAISSANCE[1]

An important source for the life of Desiderius Erasmus, the famous Dutch humanist (1446–1536), is a biographical sketch by his friend, Beatus Rhenanus. It forms a part of the dedication by Beatus to the emperor Charles V of the collected edition of Erasmus's writings, which was published at Basel in 1540. Selections from this sketch, together with extracts from the *Epistles* of Erasmus, are reproduced below. Erasmus had a very extensive correspondence. "I receive daily," he once wrote, "letters from remote parts, from kings, princes, prelates, men of learning, and even from persons of whose existence I was ignorant." The three thousand letters which have been preserved throw much light on the history of the Renaissance period.

83. The Life of Erasmus[2]

Erasmus was born in the early years of the reign of your great-grandfather Frederick III, at Rotterdam in Holland. . . . As his birthplace the town of Rotterdam will always be entitled to the reverence of the learned. The next praise is claimed by Deventer, where he had his education, having been before a choir boy in Utrecht cathedral, where after the custom of such churches he had been employed for the sake of his small, high-pitched voice. . . . The ability of Erasmus was soon shown

[1] *The Epistles of Erasmus*, translated and edited by F. M. Nichols. London, 1901–1904. 2 vols. Longmans, Green and Co.

[2] Nichols, *Epistles*, vol. i, pp. 25–37.

by the quickness with which he understood, and the fidelity with which he retained, whatever he was taught, surpassing all the other boys of his age. Among the brothers, as they were called, who are not monks but like them in their mode of living and their simple and uniform dress, was John Sintheim, a man of good learning for that time. . . . Sintheim was so delighted with the progress of Erasmus, that on one occasion he embraced the boy, exclaiming, "Well done, Erasmus, the day will come when thou wilt reach the highest summit of erudition"; and having said this, dismissed him with a kiss. Every one will admit that his prophecy came true.

Erasmus soon after lost both his parents; and by the persistence of his guardian, who wished to shake off the burden of his charge, he was thrust from the school of Deventer into a monastery near Delft. In that place he had for several years as a partner in study, William Herman of Gouda, a youth devoted to literature. Assisted and encouraged by this companionship, there was no volume of the Latin authors that Erasmus did not peruse. By day and by night the two youths were employed in study; and the time that others of their age spent idly in jesting, sleeping, and feasting, these two devoted to poring over books and practicing their pen. The bishop of Cambrai, Henry of Bergen, having heard of his fame, invited Erasmus, after he had been ordained, to join him, when he was himself preparing to visit Rome. He saw in Erasmus a person endowed with cultivated manners and of great ability in learning and eloquence. It was evident that such a companion would be creditable as well as useful, in case of any intercourse or correspondence with the pope or cardinals. Some circumstance, however, which I cannot explain, prevented the bishop from undertaking this journey. . . . Although the bishop changed his mind about going to Italy, he still kept Erasmus in his court, being delighted with the charm and distinction of his character. . . .

After a time the bishop, taking into consideration the happy genius of Erasmus, furnished him with the means of going to

Paris and applying himself to scholastic theology. . . . When he found the college life too hard, he was glad to remove to the house of an English gentleman. . . . It was then that Erasmus became known in England, to which island he shortly afterwards went, being invited by his pupils who had returned home. He returned to England afterwards more than once and taught for some time in the university of Cambridge; as he did also at Louvain.

At last by the persuasion of friends, having always had a strong desire to see Italy, he went to Bologna. . . . In Erasmus's journey he was made a doctor of theology at Turin, together with his English traveling companion. Thus he carried with him into Italy the dignity as well as the erudition which others are wont to bring back from that country. At Bologna he finished the volume of *Adages* which had been begun some years before. . . .

When this work was completed, he wrote to Aldus Manutius [1] to ask him whether he would undertake the printing of it, to which he willingly consented. Erasmus then removed to Venice. . . . His stay at Venice lasted a considerable time, since he revised and republished there two tragedies of Euripides, *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and corrected the comedies of the Roman dramatists, Terence and Plautus, with special regard to the meters. . . .

After leaving Italy he visited his friends at Antwerp and Louvain and presently crossed to England, to which he was attracted by his love of Colet the theologian, who was dean of St. Paul's in London, and of Grocin, Latimer, and Linacre, and especially of Thomas More. His patron was William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and chancellor of the kingdom, that is, supreme judge, who surpassed all the bishops of that island in liberality. He gave Erasmus money, and also presented him to the living of Aldington in Kent. This he had some scruple at first in accepting, considering that the entire emoluments rather belonged to the pastor, whose business it undeniably was to be present night

[1] The famous Venetian printer, and publisher of the "Aldine Classics."

and day to instruct the people placed under his charge; but the archbishop met his hesitation with the following question: "Who," said he, "has a fairer claim to live out of a church income than yourself, the one person who by your valuable writings instruct and educate the pastors themselves, and not them alone but all the churches of the world, which they severally direct and serve?" Certainly, I have more than once heard Erasmus say that princes ought to assist scholars by their own liberality, whereas in order to spare their purses they were accustomed to present them to benefices, which the followers of learning were compelled to accept, if they wished to secure leisure for their studies. . . .

The students of France and Germany required a separate edition of the New Testament in Greek. Erasmus had formerly written some notes upon it, and having found them among his papers he revised and extended them in great haste amid the bustle of the press. There were some who thought the Latin version itself required correction, being a work written or rather translated, as may be presumed, for the general body of Christians; and with this demand he showed his usual readiness to comply. The whole book he dedicated to Pope Leo X, and with good reason, the principal document of our religion being inscribed to its presiding chief. The revised works of St. Jerome, which he helped to prepare, were dedicated to Archbishop Warham, as an everlasting memorial of extraordinary respect. . . .

Erasmus afterwards came back to Basel with the intention of reëditing the *Adages* and finishing the *Paraphrases* of St. Paul and the Gospels. It is doubtful whether the applause with which these works were received by the world of readers was greater than the pleasure which he took in writing them. "Here," said he, "I am on my own ground." And so he was. His chief study was of the old interpreters: among the Latins, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Hilary; among the Greeks, Chrysostom and his imitator Theophylact. Only the style was his own. . . .

In stature Erasmus was . . . not a tall man. His figure was compact and elegant. He had a constitution extremely delicate, and easily affected by trifling changes, as of wine or food or climate. As he advanced in years he became subject to frequent attacks of catarrh, which is so common and constant a complaint with studious people. His complexion was fair, with hair that in his younger days had a touch of red, bluish grey eyes, and a lively expression of face; his voice was not strong, his language beautifully explicit, his dress respectable and sober, as became an imperial councilor and a clergyman. He was most constant in his attachments, no inscription on his list of friends being ever on any account changed. His memory was most retentive. He had learned as a boy the whole of Terence and Horace by heart. He was liberal to the poor, among whom, as he came home from mass, as well as on other occasions, he used to distribute money by his servant. He was especially generous and kind to any young and promising students who came to him in want of help.

84. To Christian [1]

In 1496, when teaching in Paris, Erasmus wrote as follows to one of his pupils, a young merchant of Lübeck named Christian. The letter furnishes an interesting account of a student's daily life.

Avoid nocturnal lucubrations and studies at unseasonable times. They exhaust the mind and seriously affect the health. The dawn, beloved of the Muses, is the fit time for study. After dinner either play, or walk, or take part in cheerful conversation. Possibly even among these amusements some room may be found for improvement. Eat as much food as is required, not for your pleasure, but for your health. Before supper take a short walk, and after supper do the same. Before going to bed read something exquisite and worth remembering, of which you will be thinking when overcome by sleep, and for which you will ask yourself again when you wake. Let this

[1] Nichols, *Epistles*, vol. i, p. 110.

maxim of Pliny [1] rest always in your mind: All your time is lost which you do not impart to study. Remember that nothing is more fugitive than youth, which, when once it has flown away, never returns. But I am beginning to preach, after promising to be nothing but a guide. Follow, sweetest Christian, the plan I have traced, or any better that you can.

85. To Pope Leo X [2]

The following extract from a letter written in 1516 to the pope refers to the New Testament which Erasmus had edited and published.

The New Testament in Greek and Latin, revised by us, together with our annotations, has been published for some time, under the safeguard of your auspicious name. I do not know whether the work pleases every one, but I find that up to this time it has certainly been approved by the most approved and principal theologians, and among the first by that incomparable prelate, Christopher, Bishop of Basel, who witnessed its printing. By this labor we do not intend to tear up the old and commonly accepted edition, but to amend it in some places where it is corrupt, and to make it clear where it is obscure; and this not by the dreams of my own mind, nor, as they say, with unwashed hands, but partly by the evidence of the earliest manuscripts, and partly by the opinion of those whose learning and sanctity have been confirmed by the authority of the Church — I mean Jerome, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Cyril. Meantime we are always prepared either to give our reasons, without presumption, for anything which we have rightly taught, or to correct, without grudging, any passage where as men we have unwittingly fallen into error. We sent one volume to Rome last winter, still fresh and warm from the press, which I suppose was delivered to your Holiness; and I would send the other now, if I did not know that there is no place in the world where the work is not

[1] Pliny the Elder (23–79 A.D.), a great Roman scholar.
[2] Nichols, *Epistles*, vol. ii, p. 316.

by this time within reach of everybody. Although the greatest pains have been bestowed upon it . . . yet I shall never be tired out, and will never rest until I have made it so complete and so correct that it may appear not altogether unworthy of the great pontiff and great personage to whom it is dedicated.

86. To Capito [1]

A letter which Erasmus wrote in 1517 to a clerical friend at Basel contains a suggestive account of the condition of Europe on the eve of the Protestant Reformation.

It is no part of my nature to be excessively fond of life; whether it is that I have, to my own mind, lived nearly long enough, having entered my fifty-first year, or that I see nothing in this life so splendid or delightful that it should be desired by one who is convinced by the Christian faith that a happier life awaits those who in this world earnestly attach themselves to piety. But at the present moment I could almost wish to be young again, for no other reason but this, that I anticipate the near approach of a golden age; so clearly do we see the minds of princes, as if changed by inspiration, devoting all their energies to the pursuit of peace. The chief movers in this matter are Pope Leo X and Francis I, king of France. . . .

There is nothing this king does not do or does not suffer, in his desire to avert war and consolidate peace; submitting, of his own accord, to conditions which might be deemed unfair, if he preferred to have regard to his own greatness and dignity rather than to the general advantage of the world; and exhibiting in this, as in everything else, a magnanimous and truly royal character. Therefore, when I see that the highest sovereigns of Europe, Francis I of France, Charles V of Spain, Henry VIII of England, and the emperor Maximilian I, have set all their warlike preparations aside, and established peace upon solid, and, as I trust, adamantine foundations, I am led to a confident hope that not only morality and Christian piety,

[1] Nichols, *Epistles*, vol. ii, pp. 505–508.

but also a genuine and purer literature may come to renewed life or greater splendor; especially as this object is pursued with equal zeal in various regions of the world. . . . To the piety of these princes it is due that we see everywhere, as if upon a given signal, men of genius arising and conspiring together to restore the best literature.

Polite letters, which were almost extinct, are now cultivated and embraced by Scots, by Danes, and by Irishmen. Medicine and the imperial law have a host of champions. . . . In the theological sphere there was no little to be done, because this science has been hitherto mainly professed by those who are most pertinacious in their abhorrence of the better literature. They are the more successful in defending their ignorance as they do it under pretext of piety, the unlearned vulgar being induced to believe that violence is offered to religion, if any one begins an assault upon their barbarism. . . .

The humblest part of the work has naturally fallen to my lot. Whether my contribution has been worth anything, I cannot say; at any rate those who object to the world regaining its senses are as angry with me, as if my small industry had had some influence. The work was not undertaken by me with any confidence that I could myself teach anything magnificent, but I wanted to construct a road for other persons of higher aims, so that they might be less impeded by pools and stumbling blocks in carrying home those fair and glorious treasures.

CHAPTER XX

RENAISSANCE ARTISTS[1]

An Italian painter and architect, Georgio Vasari (about 1511–1571), enjoyed a high reputation in his day, but his fame now rests mainly on his history of Italian art. This work, first published in 1550, consists of a series of biographies of the great masters from Giotto to Titian. Many of Vasari's *Lives* are those of his own contemporaries and friends. The author writes in a very attractive style and with judgment acute and unbiassed. His book, despite some inaccuracies, forms our chief source of information concerning the artists of the Renaissance. Three of these are of supreme importance, namely, Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564), and Raffaello Sanzio (1483–1520).

87. Leonardo da Vinci[2]

Truly marvelous and celestial was Leonardo, the son of Pietro da Vinci. In learning and in the rudiments of letters he would have become highly proficient, if he had not been so variable and unstable, for he set himself to learn many things, and then, after having begun them, abandoned them. Thus, in arithmetic, during the few months that he studied it, he made so much progress, that, by continually suggesting doubts and

[1] *Vasari's Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, translated by Gaston Du C. De Vere. 10 vols. London, 1912–1916. Philip Lee Warner.

[2] Vasari, *Delle vite de più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori*, vol. iv, pp. 87–106.

difficulties to the master who was teaching him, he would very often bewilder him. He gave some little attention to music, and quickly resolved to learn to play the lyre, as one who had by nature a spirit most lofty and full of refinement; wherefore he sang divinely to that instrument, improvising upon it. Nevertheless, although he occupied himself with such a variety of things, he never ceased drawing and working in relief, pursuits which suited his fancy more than any other. Pietro, having observed this, and having considered the loftiness of his intellect, one day took some of his drawings and carried them to Andrea del Verrocchio, who was his friend, and besought him to tell him whether Leonardo, by devoting himself to drawing, would acquire any skill. Andrea was astonished to see the extraordinary drawing by Leonardo, and urged Pietro to let him study art; wherefore he arranged with Leonardo that he should enter the workshop of Andrea, which Leonardo did with the greatest willingness in the world.

Leonardo practiced not one branch of art only, but all those in which drawing played a part. . . . He not only worked in sculpture, making in his youth, in clay, some heads of women that are smiling, of which plaster casts are still taken, and likewise some masterly heads of boys, but in architecture, also, he made many drawings, both of ground-plans and of other designs of buildings. He was the first, although but a youth, who suggested the plan of reducing the river Arno to a navigable canal from Pisa to Florence. He made designs of flour mills, fulling-mills, and engines, which might be driven by the force of water; and since he wished that his profession should be painting, he studied much in drawing after nature. . . . He was continually making models and designs to show men how to remove mountains with ease, and how to bore them in order to pass from one level to another; and by means of levers, windlasses, and screws he showed the way to raise and draw great weights, together with methods for emptying harbors, and pumps for removing water from low places, things which his brain never ceased from devising. . . .

It is clear that Leonardo, through his comprehension of art, began many things and never finished one of them, since it seemed to him that the hand was not able to attain to the perfection of art in carrying out the things which he imagined. . . . And so many were his caprices, that, philosophizing of natural things, he set himself to seek out the properties of herbs, going on even to observe the motions of the heavens, the path of the moon, and the courses of the sun. . . .

Leonardo painted in Milan, for the friars of St. Dominic, at the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, a Last Supper, a most beautiful and marvelous thing. To the heads of the apostles he gave such majesty and beauty that he left the head of Christ uncompleted, believing that he was unable to give it that divine air which is essential to the image of Christ. This work, remaining thus all but finished, has ever been held by the Milanese in the greatest veneration, and also by strangers as well; for Leonardo imagined and succeeded in expressing that anxiety which had seized the apostles in wishing to know who should betray their Master. For which reason in all their faces are seen love, fear, and wrath, or rather, sorrow, at not being able to understand the meaning of Christ; which thing excites no less marvel than the sight, in contrast to it, of obstinacy, hatred, and treachery in Judas. Every least part of Leonardo's picture displays an incredible diligence, seeing that even in the table-cloth the texture of the stuff is counterfeited in such a manner that linen itself could not seem more real. . . .

Leonardo undertook to execute, for Francesco del Giocondo, the portrait of Monna Lisa, his wife; and after toiling over it for four years, he left it unfinished. The work is now in the collection of King Francis I of France, at Fontainebleau.[1] In the head of Monna Lisa, whoever wished to see how closely art could imitate nature, was able to comprehend it with ease. . . . The eyes, one notes, had that luster and watery sheen which are always seen in life, and around them were all those rosy and

[1] This famous picture is now one of the treasures of the Louvre in Paris.

pearly tints, as well as the lashes, which cannot be represented without the greatest subtlety. The eyebrows, through his having shown the manner in which the hairs spring from the flesh, here more close and here more scanty . . . could not be more natural. The nose, with its beautiful nostrils, rosy and tender, appeared to be alive. The mouth, with its opening, and with its ends united by the red of the lips to the flesh tints of the face, seemed to be not colors but flesh. In the pit of the throat, if one gazed upon it intently, could be seen the beating of the pulse. And, indeed, it may be said that the portrait was painted in such a manner as to make any other craftsman, be he who he may, tremble and lose heart. Leonardo made use, also, of this device: Monna Lisa being very beautiful, he always employed, while he was painting her portrait, persons to play or sing, and jesters, who might make her merry, in order to take away that melancholy which painters are often wont to give to the portraits that they paint. And in this work of Leonardo's there was a smile so pleasing, that it was a thing more divine than human to behold; and it was held to be something marvelous, since the reality was not more alive. . . .

88. Michelangelo Buonarroti [1]

Michelangelo was much inclined to the labors of art, seeing that everything, however difficult, succeeded with him, he having had from nature a genius very apt and ardent in the noble arts of design. Moreover, in order to be entirely perfect, innumerable times he made anatomical studies, dissecting men's bodies in order to see the principles of their construction and the arrangement of the bones, muscles, veins, and nerves; the various movements and all the postures of the human body; and not of men only, but also of animals, and particularly of horses, which last he much delighted to keep. Of all these he desired to learn the principles and laws in so far as touched

[1] Vasari, *Delle vite de più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori,* vol. ix, pp. 103–111.

his art, and this knowledge he so demonstrated in the works that fell to him to handle that those who attend to no other study than this do not know more. He so executed his works, whether with the brush or with the chisel, that they are almost inimitable, and he gave to his labors such grace and loveliness that he surpassed and vanquished the ancients. He was able to wrest things out of the greatest difficulties with such facility that they do not appear wrought with effort, although whoever draws his works after him finds it very hard to imitate them.

The genius of Michelangelo was recognized in his lifetime, and not, as happens to many, after death, for several of the popes always wished to have him near them, and also Suleiman, emperor of the Turks, Francis of Valois, king of France, the emperor Charles V, the signory of Venice, and finally Duke Cosimo de' Medici. All offered him honorable salaries, for no other reason but to avail themselves of his great genius. This does not happen except to men of great worth, such as he was. It is well known that all the three arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture were so perfected in him, that it is not found that among persons ancient or modern, in all the many years that the sun had been whirling round, God has granted this to any other but Michelangelo. He had imagination of such a kind, and so perfect, and the things conceived by him in idea were such, that often, through not being able to express with the hands conceptions so terrible and grand, he abandoned his works — nay, destroyed many of them. I know that shortly before he died he burned a great number of designs, sketches, and cartoons made with his own hand, to the end that no one might see the labors endured by him and his methods of trying his genius, and that he might not appear less perfect. . . .

No one should think it strange that Michelangelo delighted in solitude, he having been one who was enamored of his art, which claims a man, with all his thoughts, for herself alone; moreover it is necessary that he who wishes to attend to her

studies should shun society. . . . And those who attributed it to caprice and eccentricity are wrong, because he who wishes to work well must withdraw himself from all cares and vexations, since art demands contemplation, solitude, and ease of life, and will not suffer the mind to wander. For all this, he prized the friendship of many great persons and of learned and ingenious men. . . .

Michelangelo greatly loved human beauty for the sake of imitation in art, being able to select from the beautiful the most beautiful, for without this imitation no perfect work can be done; but not with disgraceful thoughts, as he proved by his way of life, which was very frugal. . . . And, although he was rich, he lived like a poor man, nor did any friend ever eat at his table, or rarely; and he would not accept presents from anyone, because it appeared to him that if anyone gave him something, he would be bound to him forever. This sober life kept him very active and in need of very little sleep, and often during the night, not being able to sleep, he would rise to labor with the chisel. . . . Often in his youth he slept in his clothes, being weary with labor, and not caring to take them off only to have to put them on again later. . . .

Michelangelo was a man of tenacious and profound memory, so that, on seeing the works of others only once, he remembered them perfectly, and could avail himself of them in such a manner, that scarcely anyone has ever noticed it; nor did he ever do anything that resembled another thing by his hand, because he remembered everything that he had done. In his youth, being once with his painter-friends, they played for a supper for him who should make a figure most completely wanting in design and clumsy, after the likeness of the puppet-figures scrawled upon walls; and in this he availed himself of his memory, for he remembered having seen one of those absurdities on a wall, and drew it exactly as if he had had it before him, and thus surpassed all those painters. It was a thing difficult for a man so steeped in design, and accustomed to choice work, to come out of with credit.

89. Raffaello Sanzio [1]

How bountiful and benign Heaven sometimes shows itself in showering upon a single person the infinite riches of its treasures, and all those graces and rarest gifts that it is wont to distribute among many individuals, over a long space of time, could be clearly seen in the no less excellent than gracious Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino. . . . Nature presented him to the world, when, vanquished by art through the hands of Michelangelo Buonarroti, she wished to be vanquished, in Raffaello, by art and character together. . . .

Raffaello painted on a wall the coming of Attila to Rome and his encounter at the foot of Monte Mario with Leo the Great, who drove him away with his mere benediction. In this scene Raffaello made St. Peter and St. Paul in the air, with swords in their hands, to defend the Church. While the story of Leo the Great says nothing of this, nevertheless it was thus that he chose to represent it, perchance out of fancy, for it often happens that painters, like poets, go straying from their subject in order to make their work the more ornate, although their digressions are not such as to be out of harmony with their first intention. In the faces of the two apostles may be seen that celestial wrath and ardor which the Divine Justice is wont often to impart to the features of its ministers, charged with defending the most holy Faith. . . .

In Rome he made a picture of good size, in which he portrayed Pope Leo X, Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, and Cardinal de' Rossi. In this the figures appear to be not painted, but in full relief; there is the pile of the velvet, with the damask of the pope's vestments shining and rustling, the fur of the linings soft and natural, and the gold and silk so counterfeited that they do not seem to be in color, but real gold and silk. There is an illuminated book of parchment, which appears more real than the reality; and a little bell of wrought silver, which is

[1] Vasari, *Delle vite de più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori*, vol. iv, pp. 209–250.

more beautiful than words can tell. Among other things, also, is a ball of burnished gold on the pope's chair, wherein are reflected, as if it were a mirror, the light from the windows, the shoulders of the pope, and the walls round the room. All these things are executed with such diligence that one may well believe that no master is able, or is ever likely to be able, to do better. For this work the pope was pleased to reward him very richly; and the picture is still to be seen in Florence. . . .

For Giulio de' Medici, Cardinal and Vice-Chancellor, he painted a panel picture, to be sent into France, of the Transfiguration of Christ. . . . In this picture he represented Christ Transfigured on Mount Tabor, at the foot of which are the eleven disciples awaiting Him. . . . He made therein figures and heads so fine in their novelty and variety, to say nothing of their extraordinary beauty, that it is the common opinion of all craftsmen that this work, among the vast number that he painted, is the most glorious, the most lovely, and the most divine. Whoever wishes to know how Christ Transfigured should be represented in painting, must look at this work, wherein Raffaello made Him in perspective over Mount Tabor, in a sky of exceeding brightness, with Moses and Elias, who, illumined by a dazzling splendor, burst into life in His light. Prostrate on the ground, in attitudes of great beauty and variety, are Peter, James, and John; one has his head to the earth, and another, shading his eyes with his hands, is defending himself from the rays and intense light of the splendor of Christ. He, clothed in snow-white raiment, with His arm outstretched and His head raised, appears to reveal the Divine essence and nature of all the Three Persons united and concentrated in Himself. This picture exhibits the perfect art of Raffaello, who seems to have summoned up all this power to show the supreme force of his art in the countenance of Christ. After finishing it, the last work that he was to do, he never again touched a brush, being overtaken by death. . . .

CHAPTER XXI

THE TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO[1]

MARCO POLO was the most famous of medieval travelers. He spent nearly twenty years in the Far East and brought back to Europe much entertaining knowledge about lands and peoples previously almost unknown. About 1260 his father, Nicolo, and his uncle, Maffeo, set out from Constantinople on a trading venture, which led them, ultimately, to the court of the Mongol ruler, Kublai Khan. Kublai received the Venetians graciously and intrusted them with a message to the pope, requesting one hundred wise men of the West to teach the Mongols Christianity and the arts of civilization. The two brothers returned to Venice in 1269, but found no pope to comply with the Great Khan's wishes. Tired of waiting for a new pope to be chosen, the Polos started out in 1271 on a second journey to the East. They took with them this time Nicolo's son, Marco, then a lad of seventeen. It had been their intention, after reaching Ormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, to follow the sea route to China. But this plan was abandoned, and the Polos struck northward from Ormuz through Persia to the upper Oxus and the plateau of Pamir. These wild and inaccessible regions of central Asia were not again explored by European travelers till the nineteenth century. Crossing the desert of Gobi, the Polos at last reached China

[1] *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, the translation by Sir Henry Yule, revised by Henri Cordier. 2 vols. 3d edition. London, 1903. John Murray.

and the court of the Great Khan at Cambaluc, or Peking. Kublai took the young Marco into his service and sent him on important missions to different parts of the Mongol realm. In this way Marco became familar with a large extent of the Far East. All the Polos amassed much wealth, in consequence of the khan's favor, but for a long time he was unwilling to let them return to Europe. It was not until 1292 that they started from Zaitun on the coast of China for the long journey homeward. They reached Venice at the end of 1295 and displayed to the astonished eyes of their kinsmen the huge quantities of precious stones, rubies, sapphires, diamonds and emeralds, into which they had converted their wealth. The story of their remarkable adventures was written down, at Marco's dictation, by a certain Rusticano, who thus preserved it for all time. The original text was in French, but translations of it were made into the principal languages of western Europe.

90. The Three Magi[1]

In Persia is the city of Saba, from which the Three Magi set out when they went to worship Jesus Christ;[2] and in this city they are buried, in three very large and beautiful monuments, side by side. . . . The bodies are still entire, with the hair and beard remaining. One of these was called Jaspar, the second Melchior, and the third Balthasar. Marco Polo asked a great many questions of the people of that city as to those three Magi, but never one could he find who knew aught of the matter, except that these were three kings who were buried there in days of old. However, at a place three days' journey distant he heard of what I am going to tell you. He found a village

[1] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. 1, chs. 13–14.

[2] The story of the visit of the three wise men from the East to Jerusalem, at the time of the birth of Jesus, is found only in St. Matthew's Gospel (ii, 1–3).

there which goes by the name of Cala Ataperistan, which is as much as to say, "The Castle of Fire-worshipers." And the name is rightly applied, for the people there do worship fire, and I will tell you why.

They relate that in old times three kings of that country went away to worship a Prophet that was born, and they carried with them three kinds of offerings, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, in order to ascertain whether that prophet was God, or an earthly king, or a physician. For, said they, if he takes the gold, then he is an earthly king; if he takes the incense, he is God; if he takes the myrrh, he is a physician.

So it came to pass when they had come to the place where the Child was born, the youngest of the three kings went in first, and found the Child apparently just of his own age; so he went forth again, marveling greatly. The middle one entered next, and like the first he found the Child seemingly of his own age; so he also went forth again and marveled greatly. Lastly, the eldest went in and, as it had befallen the other two, so it befell him. And he went forth very pensive. And when the three had rejoined one another, each told what he had seen; and then they all marveled the more. So they agreed to go in all three together, and on doing so they beheld the Child with the appearance of its actual age, to wit, some thirteen days. Then they adored, and presented their gold and incense and myrrh. And the Child took all the three offerings and then gave them a small closed box; whereupon the kings departed to return into their own land.

And when they had ridden many days, they said they would see what the Child had given them. So they opened the little box and inside it they found a stone. . . . The gift of the stone implied that their faith in the Child as the True God, and the True King, and the True Physician should abide firm as a rock. But not understanding this meaning of the stone, they cast it into a well. Then straightway a fire from Heaven descended into that well wherein the stone had fallen.

When the three kings beheld this marvel, they were sore

amazed and were greatly troubled that they should have cast away the stone. So they took the fire and carried it away into their own country, and placed it in a rich and beautiful church, where the people keep it continually burning and worship it as a god, and all the sacrifices they offer are kindled with that fire.

91. The Old Man of the Mountain [1]

Marco Polo tells a romantic story, in the form current throughout the East, of the "Old Man of the Mountain." This was the title applied by the crusaders to the head of a Mohammedan sect, which had settled in the Syrian mountains north of Lebanon. His followers were notorious for their secret murders committed in blind obedience to the will of their chief. From their name (Arabic *Hashishin*) has come the modern application of the word Assassin.

The Old Man had caused a certain valley between two mountains to be inclosed and had turned it into a garden, the largest and most beautiful that ever was seen. It was filled with every variety of fruit. In it were erected pavilions and palaces the most elegant that can be imagined, all covered with gilding and exquisite painting. And there were conduits too, flowing freely with wine and milk and honey and water; and numbers of the most beautiful damsels in the world, who could play on all manner of instruments, and sang most sweetly, and danced in a manner that it was charming to behold. For the Old Man desired to make his people believe that this was actually paradise. So he had fashioned it after the description that Mohammed gave of his paradise, to wit, that it should be a beautiful garden running with conduits of wine and milk and honey and water, and full of lovely women for the delectation of all its inmates. And sure enough the Saracens of those parts believed that it *was* paradise!

Now no man was allowed to enter the garden except those whom he intended to be his Assassins. There was a fortress at the entrance to the garden, strong enough to resist all the world, and there was no other way to get in. He kept at his

[1] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. i, chs. 23–25.

court a number of the youths of the country, from twelve to twenty years of age, such as had a taste for soldiering, and to these he used to tell tales about paradise, just as Mohammed had been wont to do, and they believed in him just as the Saracens believe in Mohammed. Then he would introduce them into his garden, some four, or six, or ten at a time, having first made them drink a certain potion which cast them into a deep sleep, and then causing them to be lifted and carried in. When therefore they awoke, and found themselves in a place so charming, they deemed that it was paradise in very truth. . . . With their own good will they never would have quitted the place.

Now this prince, whom we call the Old Man, kept his court in grand and noble style and made those simple hill-folks about him believe firmly that he was a great prophet. And when he wanted to send one of his Assassins on any mission, he would cause that potion whereof I spoke to be given to one of the youths in the garden, and then had him carried into his palace. So when the young man awoke, he found himself in the castle, and no longer in that paradise; whereat he was not well pleased. He was then conducted to the Old Man's presence and bowed before him with great veneration, believing himself to be in the presence of a true prophet. The prince would then ask whence he came, and he would reply that he came from paradise, and that it was exactly such as Mohammed had described it. This of course gave the others who stood by, and who had not been admitted, the greatest desire to enter therein.

So when the Old Man would have any prince slain, he would say to such a youth, "Go thou and slay so-and-so; and when thou returnest my angels shall bear thee into paradise. And shouldst thou die, nevertheless even so will I send my angels to carry thee back into paradise." So he caused them to believe; and thus there was no order of his that they would not face any peril to execute, because of the great desire they had to get back into that paradise of his. And in this manner the Old Man got his people to murder anyone whom he desired

to get rid of. . . . Now it came to pass in the year 1252, that Alaü, Lord of the Tartars of the Levant, heard tell of these great crimes of the Old Man and resolved to make an end of him. So he took and sent one of his barons with a great army to that castle, and they besieged it for three years, but they could not take it, so strong was the place. But after three years, the defenders, having run short of food, were obliged to surrender. The Old Man was put to death with all his men, and the castle with its garden of paradise was leveled with the ground. And since that time he has had no successor; and there was an end to all his villanies.

92. The Desert of Gobi [1]

Lop is a large town at the edge of the desert, which is called the desert of Gobi, and is situated between east and northeast. It belongs to the Great Khan, and the inhabitants worship Mohammed. Now, such persons as intend to cross the desert take a week's rest in this town to refresh themselves and their cattle; and then they make ready for the journey, taking with them a month's supply for man and beast. On quitting this city they enter the desert.

The length of this desert is so great that it is said it would take a year and more to ride from one end of it to the other. And here, where its breadth is least, it takes a month to cross it. The desert is entirely composed of hills and valleys of sand, and not a thing to eat is to be found on it. But after riding for a day and a night you find fresh water, perhaps enough for some fifty or one hundred persons with their beasts, but not for more. And all across the desert you will find water in like manner, that is to say, in some twenty-eight places altogether you will find good water, but not in great quantity.

Beasts there are none; for there is nought for them to eat. But there is a marvelous thing related of this desert, which is that when travelers are on the move by night, and one of them

[1] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. i, ch. 39.

chances to lag behind or to fall asleep or the like, when he tries to gain his company again he will hear spirits talking and will suppose them to be his comrades. Sometimes the spirits will call him by name; and thus a traveler ofttimes will be led astray so that he never finds his party. And in this way many have perished. . . . Even in the daytime one hears these spirits talking. And sometimes you may hear the sound of a variety of musical instruments, and still more commonly the sound of drums. Hence in making this journey it is customary for travelers to keep close together. All the animals, too, have bells at their necks, so that they cannot easily get astray. And at sleeping-time a signal is put up to show the direction of the next day's march. Thus it is that the desert is crossed.

93. Customs of the Tartars [1]

Marco Polo gives a very interesting account of the Tartars (properly Tatars), the barbaric and nomadic inhabitants of central Asia. It was these Tartars, more or less mixed with Mongols, who in the thirteenth century conquered a large part of Asia and overran eastern Europe.

The Tartar custom is to spend the winter in warm plains, where they find good pasture for their cattle, while in summer they betake themselves to a cool climate among the mountains and valleys, where water is to be found as well as woods and pastures.

Their houses are circular, and are made of wands covered with felts. These are carried along with them whithersoever they go; for the wands are so strongly bound together, and likewise so well combined, that the frame can be made very light. Whenever they erect these huts the door is always to the south. They also have wagons so tightly covered with black felt that no rain can get in. These are drawn by oxen and camels, and the women and children travel in them. The women do the buying and selling, and whatever is necessary to provide for the husband and household; for the men all lead the life of

[1] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. i, chs. 52, 54.

gentlemen, troubling themselves about nothing but hunting and hawking, unless it be the practice of warlike exercises.

They live on the milk and meat which their herds supply, and on the produce of the chase; and they eat all kinds of flesh, including that of horses and dogs. . . . Their drink is mare's milk.[1] . . . Ten or twenty of them will dwell together in charming peace and unity, nor shall you ever hear an ill word among them.

The marriage customs of Tartars are as follows. Any man may take a hundred wives if he pleases, and if he is able to keep them. But the first wife is ever held most in honor and as the most legitimate, and the same applies to the sons whom she may bear. The husband gives a marriage payment to his wife's mother, and the wife brings nothing to her husband. They have more children than other people, because they have so many wives. They may marry their cousins, and if a father dies, his son may take any of the wives, his own mother always excepted; that is to say, the eldest son may do this, but no other. A man may also take the wife of his own brother after the latter's death. Their weddings are celebrated with great ceremony.

All their military equipment is excellent and costly. Their arms are bows and arrows, sword and mace; but above all the bow, for they are capital archers, indeed the best that are known. On their backs they wear a strong armor prepared from buffalo and other hides. They are excellent soldiers and most valiant in battle. They are also more capable of hardships than other peoples; for many a time, if need be, they will go for a month without any supply of food, living only on the milk of their mares and on such game as their bows may win them. Their horses, also, will subsist entirely on the grass of the plains, so that there is no need to carry a store of barley or straw or oats; and they are very docile to their riders. A Tartar, in case of need, will abide on horseback the entire

[1] Fermented mare's milk, known as *kumiss*, is still the habitual drink of the nomads of central Asia. It is a remarkably nourishing liquor.

night, armed at all points, while his horse will be continually grazing.

Of all troops in the world these are they which endure the greatest hardships and fatigue and which cost the least; and they are the best of all for making wide conquests of country. And this you will perceive from what you have heard and shall hear in this book; and (as a fact) there can be no manner of doubt that now they are the masters of the greater part of the world. Their troops are admirably ordered in the manner that I shall now relate.

You see, when a Tartar prince goes forth to war, he takes with him, say, one hundred thousand horsemen. Well, he appoints an officer to every ten men, one to every hundred, one to every thousand, and one to every ten thousand, so that his own orders have to be given to ten persons only, and each of these ten persons has to pass the orders only to another ten, and so on; no one having to give orders to more than ten. And every one in turn is responsible only to the officer immediately over him; and the discipline and order that comes of this method is marvelous, for they are a people very obedient to their chiefs. . . .

When they are going on a distant expedition they take no equipment with them except two leather bottles for milk, a little earthenware pot to cook their meat in, and a little tent to shelter them from rain. And in case of great urgency they will ride ten days on end without lighting a fire or taking a meal. On such an occasion they will sustain themselves with the blood of their horses, opening a vein and letting the blood jet into their mouths, drinking till they have had enough, and then staunching the wound.

They also have milk dried into a kind of paste to carry with them; and when they need food they put this in water and beat it up till it dissolves, and then drink it. . . . When they go on an expedition, every man takes some ten pounds of this dried milk with him. And of a morning he will take a half pound of it and put it in his leather bottle, with as much water as he

pleases. So, as he rides along, the milk-paste and the water in the bottle get well churned together into a kind of pap, and that makes his dinner.

When the Tartars come to an engagement with the enemy, they will gain the victory in this fashion. They never let themselves get into a regular medley, but keep perpetually riding round and shooting into the enemy. And as they do not count it any shame to run away in battle, they will sometimes pretend to do so, and in running away they turn in the saddle and shoot hard and strong at the foe and in this way make great havoc. Their horses are trained so perfectly that they will double hither and thither, like a dog, in a manner that is quite astonishing. Thus they fight to as good purpose in running away as if they stood and faced the enemy, because of the vast volleys of arrows that they shoot in this way, turning round upon their pursuers, who are fancying that they have won the battle. But when the Tartars see that they have killed and wounded a good many horses and men, they wheel round bodily, and return to the charge in perfect order and with loud cries; and in a very short time the enemy are routed. In truth they are stout and valiant soldiers and inured to war. And you perceive that it is just when the enemy sees them run and imagines that he has gained the battle, that he has in reality lost it; for the Tartars wheel round in a moment when they judge the right time has come. And after this fashion they have won many a fight.

94. Paper Money of the Great Khan [1]

It is a surprising fact that the Chinese regularly employed paper money as early as the ninth century. From them the Mongols adopted the custom of issuing this kind of currency.

The khan issues his money after this fashion. He makes them take of the bark of the mulberry tree, the leaves of which are the food of the silkworms. What they take is a certain fine white

[1] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. ii, ch. 24.

bast or skin, which lies between the wood of the tree and the thick outer bark, and this they make into something resembling sheets of paper, but black. When these sheets have been prepared, they are cut up into pieces of different sizes, having different values. . . . There is also a kind worth one bezant of gold,[1] and others of three bezants, and so up to ten. All these pieces of paper are issued with as much solemnity and authority as if they were of pure gold or silver; and on every piece a number of officials have to write their names and put their seals. And when all is duly prepared, the chief officer deputed by the khan smears the seal intrusted to him with vermilion, and impresses it on the paper, so that the form of the seal remains printed upon it in red. The money is then authentic, and anyone forging it would be punished with death. The khan causes every year to be made such a vast quantity of this money, which costs him nothing, that it must equal in amount all the treasure in the world.

With these pieces of paper, he makes all payments on his own account; and he requires them to pass current universally over all his kingdoms, provinces, and territories. And nobody, however important he may think himself, dares refuse them on pain of death. And, indeed, everybody takes them readily, for wheresoever a person may go throughout the Great Khan's dominions he shall find these pieces of paper current, and shall be able to transact all sales and purchases of goods by means of them, just as well as if they were coins of pure gold. And all the while they are so light that ten bezants' worth does not weigh one golden bezant. . . .

When any of those pieces of paper are spoilt — not that they are so very flimsy — the owner carries them to the mint, and, by paying three per cent of the value he gets new pieces in exchange. And if anyone has need of gold or silver or gems or pearls, in order to make plate, or girdles, or the like, he goes

[1] The gold coin, known as a bezant (from Byzantium or Constantinople, where it was struck), circulated throughout Europe during the Middle Ages. There was also a silver bezant.

to the mint and buys as much as he requires, paying in this paper money.

95. Coal in China [1]

It is a fact that all over the country of Cathay there are black stones existing in beds in the mountains, which the people dig out and burn like firewood. If you supply the fire with them at night and see that they are well kindled, you will find them still alight in the morning; and they make such capital fuel that no other is used throughout the country. It is true that the Chinese have plenty of wood also, but they do not burn it, because these stones burn better and cost less.

Moreover with that vast number of people, and the number of hot baths that they maintain — for every one has such a bath at least three times a week, and in winter if possible every day, while every nobleman and man of wealth has a private bath for his own use — the wood would not suffice for the purpose.[2]

96. Chinese Astrologers [3]

There are in the city of Cambaluc, what with Christians, Saracens, and Cathayans, some five thousand astrologers and soothsayers, whom the Great Khan provides with annual maintenance and clothing, and they are in the constant exercise of their art in this city.

They have a kind of astrolabe on which are inscribed the planetary signs, the hours, and critical points of the whole year. And every year these Christian, Saracen, and Cathayan astrologers, each sect apart, investigate by means of this astrolabe the course and character of the whole year, according to the indications of each of its months. They try to discover by the natural course and disposition of the planets, and the other circumstances of the heavens, what shall be the nature of the weather, and what peculiarities shall be produced by

[1] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. ii, ch. 30.

[2] Coal exists in every one of the eighteen provinces of China. In this respect the country is one of the richest in the world.

[3] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. ii, ch. 33.

each moon of the year; as, for example, under which moon there shall be thunderstorms and tempests, under which there shall be disease, wars, disorders, and treasons, and so on, according to the indications of each; but always adding that it lies with God to do less or more according to His pleasure. And they write down the results of their examination in certain little pamphlets for the year, and these are sold for a trifle to all who desire to know what is coming. Those astrologers whose predictions are found to be most exact are held to be the greatest adepts in their art, and get the greater fame.

If anyone having some great matter in hand, or proposing to make a long journey for traffic or other business, desires to know what will be the upshot, he goes to one of these astrologers and says, "Turn up your books and see what is the present aspect of the heavens, for I am going away on such and such a business." Then the astrologer will reply that the applicant must also tell the year, month, and hour of his birth; and when he has got that information he will see how the horoscope of his nativity combines with the indications of the time when the question is put, and then he predicts the result, good or bad, according to the aspect of the heavens.[1]

97. A Description of Japan[2]

Cipango[3] is an island toward the east in the high seas, fifteen hundred miles distant from the continent; and a very great island it is.

The people are white, civilized, and well-favored. They are idolaters, and are dependent on nobody. And I can tell you the quantity of gold they have is endless; for they find it in

[1] The Chinese are still much given to astrology. Their popular calendars classify all the days of the month as very lucky, lucky, neither lucky nor unlucky, unlucky, and very unlucky. In China there is also a government almanac, prepared at Peking by state astrologers, for the purpose of marking the days considered fortunate or unfortunate for various undertakings.

[2] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. iii, chs. 2, 4.

[3] Cipango, the old name of Japan, represents the Chinese *Jihpen-kwe*, "the origin of the sun," that is, the country of the rising sun. Nippon, the name by which the Japanese know their country, has the same meaning.

their own islands and their king does not allow it to be exported. Moreover, few merchants visit the country because it is so far from the mainland, and thus it comes to pass that their gold is abundant beyond all measure.

I will tell you a wonderful thing about the palace of the lord of that island. You must know that he has a great palace which is entirely roofed with fine gold, just as our churches are roofed with lead, insomuch that it would scarcely be possible to estimate its value. Moreover, all the pavement of the palace and the floors of its chambers are entirely of gold, in plates like slabs of stone, a good two fingers thick; and the windows also are of gold, so that altogether the richness of this palace is past all bounds and all belief.

They have also pearls in abundance, which are of a rose color, but fine, big, and round, and quite as valuable as the white ones. In this island some of the dead are buried and others are burnt. When a body is burnt, they put one of these pearls in the mouth, for such is their custom. They have also quantities of other precious stones.

Now you must know that the idols of Cathay and of this island are all of the same class. And in this island, as well as elsewhere, some of the idols have the head of an ox, some have the head of a pig, some of a dog, some of a sheep, and some of other kinds. And some of them have four heads, while some have three, one growing out of either shoulder. There are also some that have four hands, some ten, some a thousand! And they do put more faith in those idols that have a thousand hands than in any of the others. And when any Christian asks them why they make their idols in so many different forms, and not all alike, they reply that just so their forefathers were wont to have them made, and just so they will leave them to their children, and these to succeeding generations. And so they will be handed down forever. And you must understand that the deeds ascribed to these idols are such a parcel of devil-tries as it is best not to tell. So let us have done with the idols and speak of other things.

But I must tell you one thing still concerning that island (and it is the same with the other East Indian islands), that if the natives take prisoner an enemy who cannot pay a ransom, he who has the prisoner summons all his friends and relations, and they put the prisoner to death, and then they cook him and eat him, and they say there is no meat in the world so good!

98. The Pearl-Fishers of Ceylon [1]

You must know that the sea here forms a gulf between the island of Ceylon and the mainland. And all round this gulf the water has a depth of no more than ten or twelve fathoms, and in some places no more than two fathoms. The pearl-fishers take their vessels, great and small, and proceed into this gulf, where they stop from the beginning of April till the middle of May. . . . Here they cast anchor and shift from their large vessels into small boats. You must know that the many merchants who go divide into various companies, and each of these must engage a number of men on wages, hiring them for April and half of May. Of all the produce they have first to pay the king, as his royalty, the tenth part. And they must also pay those men who charm the great fishes, to prevent them from injuring the divers while engaged in seeking pearls under water, a twentieth part of all that they take. These fish-charmers are termed Brahmans; and their charm holds good for that day only, for at night they dissolve the charm so that the fishes can work mischief at their will. These Brahmans know also how to charm beasts and birds and every living thing. When the men have got into the small boats, they jump into the water and dive to the bottom, which may be at a depth of from four to twelve fathoms, and there they remain as long as they are able. And there they find the shells that contain the pearls, and these they put into a net bag tied round the waist and mount up to the surface with them, and then dive anew. When they cannot hold their breath any longer they come up again, and after a little while down they dive once

[1] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. iii, ch. 16.

more, and so they go on all day. The shells are like those of oysters. And in these shells are found pearls, great and small, of every kind, sticking in the flesh of the shell fish.

In this manner pearls are secured in great quantities, for thence in fact come the pearls which are spread all over the world. And I can tell you the king of that state has a very great treasure from his dues upon those pearls.

99. Hindu Brahmans [1]

While visiting India, Marco Polo came in contact with the Hindu priests, or Brahmans. He describes their characteristics at some length.

The Brahmans are idolaters; and they pay greater heed to signs and omens than any other people. I will mention as an example one of their customs. To every day of the week they assign an augury of this sort. Suppose that there is some purchase in hand, he who proposes to buy, when he gets up in the morning takes note of his own shadow in the sun, which he says ought to be on that day of such and such a length; and if his shadow be of the proper length for the day he completes his purchase; if not, he will on no account do so, but waits till his shadow corresponds with that prescribed. For there is a length established for the shadow for every day of the week; and the merchant will complete no business unless he finds his shadow of the length set down for that particular day. . . .

Again, if one of them is in the house, and is meditating a purchase, should he see a tarantula (such as are very common in that country) on the wall, provided it advances from a quarter that he deems lucky, he will complete his purchase at once; but if it comes from a quarter that he considers unlucky he will not do so on any inducement. Moreover, if in going out, he hears anyone sneeze, if it seems to him a good omen he will go on, but if the reverse he will sit down on the spot where he is, as long as he thinks that he ought to tarry before going on again. Or, if in traveling along the road he sees a swallow

[1] *Book of Ser Marco Polo*, bk. iii, ch. 20.

fly by, should its direction be lucky he will proceed, but if not, he will turn back again. . . .

There are certain members of the order who lead the most ascetic life in the world, going stark naked; and these worship the ox. Most of them have a small ox of brass or pewter or gold, which they wear tied over the forehead. Moreover, they take cowdung and burn it, and make a powder thereof; and make an ointment of it, and daub themselves withal, doing this with as great devotion as Christians use holy water. If they meet anyone who treats them well, they daub a little of this powder on the middle of his forehead.

They eat not from bowls or trenchers, but put their victuals on large leaves; these, however, they use dry, never green. For they say the green leaves have a soul in them, and so it would be a sin to use them. And they would rather die than do what they deem their law pronounces to be sin. If anyone asks how it comes that they are not ashamed to go stark naked as they do, they say, "We go naked because naked we came into the world, and we desire to have nothing about us that is of this world. Moreover, we have no sin of the flesh to be conscious of, and therefore we are not ashamed of our nakedness, any more than you are to show your hand or your face. You who are conscious of the sins of the flesh do well to have shame and to cover your nakedness."

They would not kill an animal on any account, not even a fly, or a flea, or a louse, or anything in fact that has life; for they say these all have souls, and it would be sin to do so. They do not eat vegetables in a green state, but only such as are dry. And they sleep on the ground stark naked, without a scrap of clothing on them or under them, so that it is a marvel they do not all die, in place of living so long as I have told you. They fast every day in the year and drink nought but water. And when a novice has to be received among them they keep him awhile in their convent and make him follow their rule of life. . . .

They are such cruel and perfidious idolaters that it is very

deviltry! They say that they burn the bodies of the dead, because if they were not burnt worms would be bred which would eat the body; and when no more food remained for them these worms would die, and the soul belonging to that body would bear the sin and the punishment of their death. And that is why they burn their dead.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ABORIGINES OF THE NEW WORLD [1]

THE narratives of the voyages of Elizabethan mariners form England's true prose epic; and in Richard Hakluyt she found, not her Homer, indeed, but the man who did most to preserve the records of these voyages for succeeding times. His fame mainly rests on *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, a large work in three volumes, of which a second edition was published in 1596–1600. As the title indicates, it is a compilation of the various accounts of the adventurous journeys made by English seamen in the Old World and the New, chiefly during the sixteenth century. Had not Hakluyt formed his collection, doubtless many of the narratives in it would have been lost. The book is a treasure-house of material for the history of geographical discovery and colonization. It also contains many interesting descriptions of aboriginal peoples.

100. The Indians of Dominica and Venezuela [2]

The history of the English in America may be said to begin with the three slave-trading voyages of Sir John Hawkins of Plymouth. These were made in the years 1562–63, 1564–65, and 1567–68. On his first voyage Hawkins took a cargo of negro slaves from Africa to the Spanish colony of Hispaniola (Haiti). His were the first English ships to

[1] *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, edited by Richard Hakluyt. 12 vols. Glasgow, 1903–1905. James MacLehose and Sons.

[2] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. x, pp. 25, 27–28.

navigate the West Indian seas. Hawkins's second voyage[1] was on a more extensive scale. He sailed with three ships to the Guinea coast, procured a large number of negroes, and then started across the Atlantic to the West Indies. The first land sighted was the island of Dominica, one of the Lesser Antilles.

The cannibals of this island, and also others adjacent, are the most desperate warriors in the West Indies, by the report of the Spaniards, who are never able to conquer them. . . . Not two months past, in the said island, a ship being driven to water there, was in the night set upon by the inhabitants, who cut its cable, whereby the sailors were driven ashore and so taken by them and eaten. The *Green Dragon* of Newhaven, whose captain was one Bontemps, came to one of those islands, called Grenada; and, being driven to water, could not do so on account of the cannibals, who fought with him very desperately for two days. For our part, also, if we had not lighted upon the most deserted place in all that island, we could not have missed them, but should have been greatly troubled by them.

From Dominica Hawkins sailed southward to the coast of Venezuela. Here he came into contact with the Cumanas, an Indian tribe which had reached a considerable degree of civilization. They lived in fixed villages, practiced agriculture, and were bold and skillful warriors.

Near this place were certain Indians, who the next day after we arrived came down to us, presenting mill and cakes of bread, which they had made of a kind of corn called maize.[2] . . . Also they brought down to us hens, sweet potatoes, and pine-apples, which we bought for beads, pewter whistles, glasses, knives, and other trifles.

These sweet potatoes are the most delicate roots that may be eaten, and far exceed our parsnips or carrots. Their pine-apples are of the bigness of two fists, the outside whereof is

[1] The narrative of this voyage is by John Sparke, one of the members of the expedition.

[2] Indian corn, or maize, one of the most important of the cereals, originated in the New World, where it was extensively cultivated.

rough, but it is soft like the rind of a cucumber, and the inside eateth like an apple; but it is more delicious than any sweet apple sugared. The Indians are of tawny color, having every one of them, both men and women, hair all black, the women wearing the same hanging down to their shoulders, and the men rounded, and without beards. Neither men nor women allow any hair to grow in any part of their body, but daily pull it off as it groweth. . . . These people are very small feeders; for traveling they carry but two small bottles of gourds, wherein they put, in one the juice of sorrel whereof they have great store, and in the other flour of their maize, which, being moist, they eat, taking sometime of the other.

Every man carries his bow and arrows. Some arrows are poisoned for wars. These they keep together in a cane, which cane is of the bigness of a man's arm; other arrows are provided with broad heads of iron, wherewith they strike fish in the water. . . . They are such good archers that the Spaniards for fear thereof arm themselves and their horses with quilted canvas two inches thick, and leave no place of their body open to their enemies, except their eyes, which they may not hide; and yet oftentimes are they hit in that so small an opening. Their poison is of such a force that a man being stricken therewith dieth within four-and-twenty hours, as the Spaniards affirm; and, in my judgment, it is likely there can be no stronger poison as they make it. They use apples which are very fair and red of color, but are a strong poison, together with venomous bats, vipers, adders, and other serpents. Of all these they make a mixture, and therewith anoint the points of their arrows.

101. The Natives of Florida [1]

Having disposed of his slaves and loaded his vessels with hides and other West Indian products, Hawkins started on the return voyage. In the Caribbean the current carried him far to the leeward, compelling him to double the western point of Cuba and sail past the shores of Florida. He visited the French settlement in Florida, and thence

[1] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. x, pp. 51–53.

proceeded northward to Newfoundland, and so, with the prevailing westerly winds, to England. This was the pioneer voyage made by Englishmen along the coast of what is now the United States.

Their houses are not many together, for in one house a hundred of them lodge. A house is made much like a great barn, and in strength not inferior to ours, for they have stanchions and rafters of whole trees, and are covered with palmito leaves. . . . In the midst of each house is a hearth, where they make great fires all night; and they sleep upon certain pieces of wood hewn in for the bowing of their backs, and another piece made high for their heads. In their houses they remain only at night, and in the day they frequent the fields, where they prepare their food. . . . There is one thing to be marveled at, for the making of their fire, and not only they, but the negroes also do the same. Their fire is made only by two sticks, rubbing them one against another; and this they may do in any place they come, where they find sticks sufficient for the purpose.

In their apparel the men use only deer skins . . . which are painted, some yellow and red, some black and russet, and every man according to his own taste. They do not omit to paint their bodies also with curious knots, or antique work, as every man in his own fancy deviseth. To make this painting continue the better, they prick their flesh with a thorn, and dent in the same, whereby the painting may have better hold. . . . In their wars they use bows and arrows, whereof their bows are made of a kind of yew, but blacker than ours. . . . Their arrows are also of a great length, but yet of reeds, like those of other Indians; but varying in two points, both in length and also for nocks and feathers, whereby they shoot very steady. The heads of the same are vipers' teeth, bones of fish, and flint stones. Points of knives, which they obtained from the Frenchmen, they broke and used in their arrowheads. . . . The women for their apparel also use painted skins, but most of them wear gowns of moss, somewhat longer than our moss. These they sew together artificially, and make in the form of a surplice.

102. The Carolina Indians [1]

Sir Walter Raleigh, having obtained from Queen Elizabeth the privilege of founding a settlement in America, sent over in 1584 two small ships commanded by Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow. They reached the New World in the latitude of North Carolina and spent several weeks viewing the country and trading with the Indians. Barlow, in his narrative of the voyage, writes enthusiastically of the natives, whom he describes as "most gentle, loving, and faithful, void of all guile and treason, and living after the manner of the Golden Age."

The next day there came unto us a number of boats, and in one of them the king's brother, accompanied by forty or fifty men, very handsome and goodly people, and in their behavior as mannerly and civil as any Europeans. . . . When he came to the place, his servants spread a long mat upon the ground, on which he sat down, and at the other end of the mat four others of his company did the like; the rest of his men stood round about him somewhat afar off. When we came to him, with our weapons, he never moved from his place, nor any of the other four, nor ever mistrusted any harm to be offered from us; but, sitting still, he beckoned us to come and sit by him, which we did; and, being set, he made all signs of joy and welcome, striking on his head and his breast and afterwards on ours, to show we were all friends. After he had made a long speech to us, we presented him with various things, which he received very joyfully and thankfully. None of the company dared speak one word all the time; only the four which were at the other end spoke in one another's ears very softly.

After we had presented the king's brother with such things as we thought he liked, we likewise made presents to the others, who sat on the mat. But he arose and put them into his own basket, making signs and tokens that everything ought to be delivered unto him, and that the rest were only his servants and followers. A day or two after this we fell to trading with them, exchanging some things that we had for chamois, buff, and deer skins. When we showed him our packet of merchandise,

[1] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. viii, pp. 300–303.

of all things that he saw a bright tin dish most pleased him, which he presently took up and clapt before his breast. Afterwards he made a hole in the brim thereof and hung it about his neck, making signs that it would defend him against the arrows of his enemies. For these people maintain a deadly and fearful war with the people and king adjoining. We exchanged our tin dish for twenty skins, worth twenty crowns, and a copper kettle for fifty skins, worth fifty crowns. They offered good exchange for our hatchets, axes, knives, and would have given anything for swords; but we would not part with any.

After two or three days the king's brother came aboard the ships and drank wine, and partook of our meat and of our bread, and liked exceedingly thereof. And after a few days had passed he brought to the ships his wife, his daughter, and two or three of his children. His wife was a good looking woman, of small stature, and very bashful. She had on her back a long cloak of leather, with the fur side next to her body, and before her a piece of the same. About her forehead she had a band of white coral. In her ears she had bracelets of pearls. . . . The rest of her women of the better sort had pendants of copper hanging in either ear, and some of the children of the king's brother and other noblemen had five or six in either ear; he himself had upon his head a broad plate of gold or copper. . . . His apparel was as his wife's, only the women wear their hair long on both sides, and the men but on one. They are of color yellowish, and their hair black for the most part; and yet we saw children that had very fine auburn and chestnut-colored hair. . . .

Their boats are made of one tree, either of pine or of pitch-trees; a wood not commonly known to our people, nor found growing in England. They have no edge-tools to make them with; or if they have any they are very few. They got some, years ago, out of a wreck of a Christian ship which had been beaten that way by some storm and outrageous weather. None of the crew were saved, but the ship, or some part of her, being cast upon the sand, they drew the nails and the spikes, and

made them into their best instruments. For the construction of a boat they burn down some great tree, or take such as are windfallen, and, putting gum and resin upon one side thereof, they set fire to it, and when the fire hath burnt it hollow they cut out the coal with their shells, and wherever they would burn it deeper or wider they lay on gums, which burn away the timber. By this means they fashion a very fine boat, such as will transport twenty men. Their oars are like scoops, and many times they set with long poles, as the depth serveth.

103. The Eskimos [1]

Sir Martin Frobisher was another Elizabethan seaman who helped to open the way for the settlement of Englishmen in America. He was the pioneer in the long and fruitless search for a Northwest Passage leading from Europe to Asia. The passage once discovered, Frobisher intended to plant colonies on the Pacific shore of the New World. Frobisher made voyages to the Arctic regions during the years 1576–1578. The narrative of the third voyage [2] includes an interesting description of the Eskimos, a people hitherto almost unknown to Europeans.

They are very active and nimble men. They are a strong people and very warlike, for they would often muster themselves, and, after the manner of a skirmish, trace their ground very rapidly and manage their bows and darts with great dexterity. They go clad in coats made of the skins of beasts, as of seals, deer, bears, foxes, and hares. They have also some garments of feathers, finely sewed and compacted together. . . . In summer they wear the hairy side of their coats outward, and sometimes go naked because of the heat. And in winter, as by signs they have declared, they wear four or five fold upon their bodies, with the hair turned inwards for warmth. . . .

These people are in nature very subtle and sharp-witted. They are able to understand our meaning by signs and to make answer in the same manner. And if they have not seen the thing whereof you ask them, they will wink, or cover their eyes with their hands, as if to say, it hath been hid from their

[1] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. vii, pp. 369–374.

[2] By George Best, captain of one of Frobisher's ships.

sight. If they do not understand what you ask them, they will stop their ears. They will teach us the names of each thing in their language which we desire to learn, and are apt in learning anything of us. They take very great delight in music, and will keep time and stroke to any tune which you sing, both with their voice, head, hands, and feet, and will sing the same tune aptly after you. They will row with our oars in our boats and keep a true stroke with our mariners, and seem to find much pleasure therein. They live in caves of the earth and hunt for their dinners or prey, even as the bears or other wild beasts do. They eat raw flesh and fish and refuse no meat of any sort. They are desperate in their warfare, sullen of nature, and ravenous in their manner of feeding. . . .

For their weapons to fight their enemies or kill their prey they have darts, slings, bows, and arrows headed with sharp stones, bones, and some with iron. They are exceeding friendly and kind-hearted, one to the other, and mourn greatly at the loss or harm of their fellows; and express their grief of mind, when they part one from another, with mournful songs and dirges. . . .

They have boats made of leather, and covered clean over, saving one place in the middle to sit in; and they row therein with one oar more swiftly a great deal than we in our boats can do with twenty. They have one sort of larger boats wherein they can carry above twenty persons; and have a mast with a sail thereon, which sail is made of thin skins or bladders sewed together with the sinews of fishes. They are good fishermen and in their small boats, being disguised with their coats of seals' skins, they deceive the fish, who take them rather for seals than for men. They are good marksmen. With their dart or arrow they will hit a duck, or any other fowl, in the head. When they shoot at a great fish with any of their darts, they tie a bladder thereunto, whereby they may the better find them again; and the fish, not able to carry it so easily away, because the bladder doth buoy the dart, will at length be weary and die therewith.

They traffic and exchange their commodities with some other people, of whom they secure such things as their miserable country, and ignorance of art to make, denieth them to have; as bars of iron, heads of iron for their darts, needles made four-square, and certain buttons of copper, which they wear upon their foreheads for ornament, as our ladies in the court of England use pearls. Also they have made signs unto us that they have seen gold. . . .

They have nothing in use among them to make fire withal, except a kind of heath, and moss which groweth there; and they kindle their fire with continual rubbing and fretting one stick against another, as we do with flints. They draw with dogs in sleds upon the ice, and remove their tents therewithal, wherein they dwell in summer, when they go hunting for their prey and provision against winter. They do sometimes par-boil their meat a little and seethe the same in kettles made of beasts' skins; they have also pans cut and made of stone very artificially. They use various traps wherewith they take fowl. The women carry their sucking children at their backs, and do feed them with raw flesh, which first they chew a little in their own mouths. The women have their faces marked or painted over with small blue spots; they have black and long hair on their heads, and trim the same in a decent order. The men have but little hair on their faces and very thin beards. . . .

We have not yet found any venomous serpent or other hurtful thing in these parts; but there is a kind of small fly or gnat that stingeth and offendeth sorely, leaving many red spots in the face and other places where it stingeth. They have snow and hail in the best time of their summer, and the ground frozen three fathoms deep.

These people are great enchanters, and use many charms of witchcraft; for when their heads ache they tie a great stone with a string unto a stick, and with certain prayers and words done to the stick they lift up the stone from the ground, which sometimes with all a man's force they cannot stir, and sometimes again they lift as easily as a feather; and hope thereby

with certain ceremonious words to have ease and help. And they made us by signs to understand, lying groveling with their faces upon the ground, and making a noise downward, that they worship the spirits under them.

104. The California Indians [1]

Sir Francis Drake, most adventurous of Elizabethan seamen, won undying fame as the first Englishman to sail around the world. While still a young man Drake acquired a great reputation in fighting against the Spaniards in the West Indies. At this time he crossed the isthmus of Panama, and from the top of a high tree obtained his first view of the Pacific. Drake then and there prayed God "to give him life and leave to sail once in an English ship upon that sea." Queen Elizabeth favored his project and furnished him with the means to carry it out. The fleet with which he set out in December, 1577, consisted of only five small vessels, and their united crews mustered only one hundred and sixty-six men. Drake reached the coast of Brazil in April, 1578, and a few months later entered the strait of Magellan. He then sailed along the South American coast, capturing the Spanish galleons laden with silver and even seizing the treasures in the unprotected Peruvian ports. Drake deemed it unsafe to return by the same route, because of the danger of being intercepted in the strait of Magellan by the Spaniards. He therefore continued northward along the coast of California and took possession of the country in the name of the queen. The place where he landed (June, 1579) remains doubtful, but it was probably a small bay just south of San Francisco. Drake remained in California for some time, refitting his ship, the *Golden Hind*, in preparation for the homeward voyage. The account [2] of his expedition contains the following description of the aboriginal inhabitants of California.

In this bay we anchored; and the people of the country, having their houses close by the water's side, showed themselves unto us and sent a present to our general. When they came unto us they greatly wondered at the things that we brought. But our general, according to his natural and accustomed humanity, courteously treated them and liberally bestowed on them necessary things to cover their nakedness; whereupon they supposed us to be gods, and would not be

[1] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. xi, pp. 119–122.

[2] Written by Francis Pretty, one of Drake's gentlemen-at-arms.

persuaded to the contrary. The presents which they sent to our general were feathers and cauls of net-work. . . .

After they had departed from us, they came and visited us the second time, and brought with them feathers and bags of tobacco for presents. And when they came to the top of the hill, at the bottom whereof we had pitched our tents, they stationed themselves. Then an Indian, appointed for speaker, wearied himself with making a long oration; which done they left their bows upon the hill and came down with their presents. In the meantime the women remaining upon the hill tormented themselves lamentably, tearing their flesh from their cheeks, whereby we perceived that they were engaged in a sacrifice. . . .

The news of our arrival having spread through the country, the people who lived round about came down, and among them the king himself, a man of a goodly stature and comely person, with many other tall and warlike men; before whose arrival were sent two ambassadors to our general, to signify that their king was coming. . . . This ended, they by signs requested our general to send something by their hand to their king, as a token that his coming might be in peace. Our general having satisfied them, they returned with glad tidings to their king, who marched to us with a princely majesty, the people crying continually after their manner; and as they drew near unto us, they tried to behave with comeliness. In the forefront was a man of a goodly personage, who bore the scepter or mace before the king; whereupon hanged two crowns. . . . Next to him who bore the scepter was the king himself, with his guard about his person, clad with coney skins. After them followed the naked common sort of people, every one having his face painted, some with white, some with black, and some in colors, and having in their hands one thing or another for a present. Even their children brought presents.

In the meantime our general gathered his men together and marched within his fenced place, making a very warlike show. . . . The general permitted them to enter within our bulwark, where they continued their song and dance a reasonable time.

When they had satisfied themselves, they made signs to our general to sit down; to whom the king and other persons made several orations, or rather supplications, that he would take their province and kingdom into his hand, and become their king, making signs that they would resign unto him their right and title of the whole land and become his subjects. In which, to persuade us the better, the king and the rest, did set the crown upon his head, enriched his neck with all their chains, and offered him many other things, saluting him by the name of *Hioh*, adding thereunto, as it seemed, a sign of triumph. This honor our general thought not meet to reject, because he knew not what profit it might be to our country. Wherefore in the name, and to the use of the queen, he took the scepter, crown, and dignity of the said country into his hands, wishing that the riches and treasure thereof might so conveniently be transported to the enriching of her kingdom at home, as it aboundeth in the same.

In July, 1579, Drake set out on the long journey across the Pacific. He reached the East Indies in November of that year, but did not arrive in England till the following September. His circumnavigation of the globe was thus performed in about two years and ten months. Queen Elizabeth visited the bold mariner at Deptford, knighted him on shipboard, and gave orders that his vessel should be preserved as a memorial of the voyage.

CHAPTER XXIII

MARTIN LUTHER AND THE BEGINNING OF THE REFORMATION [1]

MARTIN LUTHER, despite his busy life as professor, preacher, translator of the Bible, and leader of the Reformation, was so voluminous a correspondent that the complete collection of those of his letters which have been preserved fills no less than ten volumes. He could never have imagined that his private letters would sometime see the light of day, else we should not have had in them so frank a revelation of his personality. Luther's correspondence mirrors the man — his faults and petty weaknesses, as well as his fine spiritual nature, his intrepid will, and his devotion to truth as he saw the truth. Luther had many friends, among them John Lang and George Spalatin, who had been his fellow-students in the University of Erfurt, and Philip Melanchthon. Some of his letters to these men, together with the letters which he addressed to the archbishop of Mayence, Pope Leo X, and the emperor Charles V, present a fascinating account of the early days of the Reformation.

105. To John Lang [2]

. . . I am at present reading our Erasmus, but my heart recoils more and more from him. But one thing I admire is, that he constantly and learnedly accuses not only the monks, but also the priests, of a lazy, deep-rooted ignorance. Only, I fear that

[1] *The Letters of Martin Luther*, translated by Margaret A. Currie. London, 1908. Macmillan and Company.

[2] Currie, *Letters*, No. xi.

he does not spread Christ and God's grace sufficiently abroad, of which he knows very little. The human is to him of more importance than the divine.

Although unwilling to judge him, I warn you not to read blindly what he writes. For we live in perilous times, and every one who is a good Hebrew and Greek scholar is not a true Christian; even St. Jerome, with his five languages, cannot approach St. Augustine with his one language. Erasmus, of course, views all this from a different standpoint. Those who ascribe something to man's freedom of will regard such things differently from those who know only God's free grace.[1] . . .

106. To Albrecht, Archbishop of Mayence [2]

. . . . With your Electoral Highness's consent, the papal indulgence for the rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome is being carried through the land. I do not complain so much of the loud cry of the preacher of indulgences, which I have not heard, but regret the false meaning which the simple folk attach to them, the poor souls believing that when they have purchased such letters they have secured their salvation; that the moment the money tingles in the box souls are delivered from Purgatory, and that all sins will be forgiven through a letter of indulgence, even the sin of reviling the blessed Mother of God, were anyone blasphemous enough to do so. And, lastly, they believe that through these indulgences a man is freed from all penalties! Ah, dear God! Thus are those souls which have been committed to your care, dear father, being led in the paths of death, and for them you will be required to render an account. . . . Therefore, I could be silent no longer.

How then can you, through false promises of indulgences, which do not promote the salvation or sanctification of their souls, lead the people into carnal security, by declaring them free from the painful consequences of their wrongdoing, with which the Church was wont to punish their sins?

[1] Written from Wittenberg, March 1, 1517. [2] Currie, *Letters*, No. xvi.

Deeds of piety and love are infinitely better than indulgences, and yet the bishops do not preach these so earnestly, although it is their principal duty to proclaim the love of Christ to their people. Christ has nowhere commanded indulgences to be preached, but the Gospel. So to what danger does a bishop expose himself, who, instead of having the Gospel proclaimed among the people, dooms it to silence, while the cry of indulgences resounds through the land? Will Christ not say to them, "Ye strained at a gnat, and swallowed a camel?"

In addition, reverend father, it has gone abroad under your name, but doubtless without your knowledge, that this indulgence is the priceless gift of God, whereby the man may be reconciled to God and escape the fires of Purgatory, and that those who purchase the indulgences have no need of repentance.

What else can I do, right reverend father, than beg your Serene Highness carefully to look into this matter, and do away with this little book of instructions. If you do not command those preachers to adopt another style of preaching, another may arise and refute them, by writing another book in answer to the previous one, to the confusion of your Serene Highness, the very idea of which alarms me greatly. I hope that your Serene Highness may graciously deign to accept the faithful service which your insignificant servant, with true devotion, would render you. . . .

If agreeable to your Grace, perhaps you will glance at my inclosed theses, that you may see that the opinion on the indulgences is a very varied one, while those who proclaim them fancy they cannot be disputed.[1]

107. To Pope Leo X[2]

I know, most holy father, that evil reports are being spread about me, some friends having vilified me to your Holiness, as if I were trying to belittle the power of the keys and of the Supreme Pontiff. I am accused of being a heretic and a rene-

[1] Written from Wittenberg, October 31, 1517. [2] Currie, *Letters*, No. xxiv.

gade, and a thousand other ill names are hurled at me, enough to make my ears tingle and my eyes start in my head. My one source of confidence is an innocent conscience. . . . But, most holy father, I must hasten to the point, hoping your Holiness will graciously listen to me, for I am as awkward as a child.

Some time ago the preaching of the apostolic jubilee of the indulgences was begun. It soon made such headway that these preachers thought they could say what they wished, under the shelter of your Holiness's name, alarming the people at such malicious, heretical lies being proclaimed to the derision of the spiritual powers. And, not satisfied with pouring out their venom, they have disseminated the little book in which their malicious lies are confirmed, binding the father confessors by oath to inculcate those lies upon their people. I shall not enlarge upon the disgraceful greed with which every syllable of this tiny book reeks. This is true, and no one can shut his eyes to the scandal, for it is manifest in the book. And they continue to lead the people captive with their vain consolation, plucking, as the prophet Micah says, "their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones," while they wallow in abundance themselves. They use your Holiness's name to allay the uproar they cause, and threaten them with fire and sword and the ignominy of being called heretics; nay, one can scarcely believe the wiles they use to cause confusion among the people. Complaints are universal as to the greed of the priests, while the power of the keys and the pope is being discredited in Germany.

And when I heard of such things I burned with zeal for the honor of Christ, or, if some will have it so, the young blood within me boiled; and yet I felt it did not behoove me to do anything in the matter except to draw the attention of some prelates to the abuses. Some acted upon the hint, but others derided it and interpreted it in various ways. For the dread of your Holiness's name and the threat of being placed under the ban were all-powerful. At length I thought it best not to be harsh, but

oppose them by throwing doubts upon their doctrines, preparatory to a disputation upon them. So I threw down the gauntlet to the learned by issuing my theses, and asking them to discuss them, either by word of mouth or in writing, which is a well-known fact. From this, most holy father, has such a fire been kindled that, to judge from the hue and cry, one would think the whole world had been set ablaze.

And perhaps this is because I, through your Holiness's apostolic authority, am a doctor of theology, and they do not wish to admit that I am entitled, according to the usage of all universities in Christendom, openly to discuss, not only indulgences, but many higher doctrines, such as Divine Power, Forgiveness, and Mercy. . . .

I made the theses public that I might have the protection of your Holiness's name, and find refuge beneath the shadow of your wings. So all may see from this how I esteem the spiritual power and honor the dignity of the keys. For, if I was such as they say, and had not held a public discussion on the subject, which every doctor is entitled to do, then assuredly his Serene Highness, Frederick, elector of Saxony, who is an ardent lover of Christian and apostolic truth, would not have suffered such a dangerous person in his University of Wittenberg.[1]

108. To Pope Leo X [2]

Necessity once more compels me, the most unworthy and despicable creature upon earth, to address your Holiness. Therefore, would you, in Christ's stead, graciously bend your fatherly ear to the petition of me, your poor sheep. The esteemed Karl von Miltitz, your Holiness's treasurer, has been here and has complained bitterly to the elector Frederick of my insolence toward the Roman Church and your Holiness, and has demanded a recantation from me.

When I heard this, I felt aggrieved that all my efforts to do honor to the Roman Church had been so misrepresented,

[1] Written from Wittenberg, May 30, 1518. [2] Currie, *Letters*, No. xxxv.

and considered foolhardiness and deliberate malice by the head of the Church.

But what shall I do, most holy father? I am quite at sea, being unable to bear the weight of your Holiness's wrath or to escape from it. I am asked to recant and withdraw my theses. If by so doing I could accomplish the end desired, I would not hesitate a moment.

But my writings have become far too widely known and have taken root in too many hearts — beyond my highest expectations — now to be summarily withdrawn. Nay, our German nation, with its cultured and learned men, in the bloom of an intellectual reawakening, understands this question so thoroughly that, on this account, I must avoid even the appearance of recantation, much as I honor and esteem the Roman Church in other respects. For such a recantation would only bring it into still worse repute and make every one speak against it.

It is those, O holy father, who have done the greatest injury to the Church in Germany, and whom I have striven to oppose — those who, by their foolish preaching and their insatiable greed, have brought your name into bad odor, sullying the sanctity of the sacred chair and making it an offense. It is those who, in revenge for my having rendered their godless endeavors abortive, accuse me to your Holiness as the originator of their plots. Now, holy father, I declare before God that I have never had the slightest wish to attack the power of the Roman Church or your Holiness in any way, or even to injure it through cunning. Yes, I declare openly that there is nothing in heaven or on earth which can come before the power of this Church, except Jesus Christ alone — Lord over all. Therefore do not believe those malicious slanderers who speak otherwise of Luther. I also gladly promise to let the question of indulgences drop and be silent, if my opponents restrain their boastful, empty talk. In addition, I shall publish a pamphlet exhorting the people to honor the Holy Church, and not ascribe such foolish misdeeds to her, or imitate my own severity, in

which I have gone too far toward her, and by so doing I trust these divisions may be healed. For this one thing I desired, that the Roman Church, our mother, should not be sullied through the greed of strangers, nor the people led into error, being taught to regard love as of less importance than the indulgences. All else, seeing it neither helps nor injures, I regard of less importance.

If I can do anything more in the matter I am willing to do it.[1]

109. To the Emperor Charles V [2]

Doubtless every one marvels, most gracious emperor, that I presume to write to your Imperial Majesty. For what is so unusual as that the king of kings and lord of lords should be addressed by the meanest of men? But whoever can estimate the enormous importance of this subject, which so intimately concerns the divine verities, will not wonder. . . .

Several small books I wrote drew down the envy and hatred of many great people, instead of their gratitude, which I merit. First, because against my will I had to come forward, although I had no desire to write anything, had not my opponents, through guile and force, compelled me to do so. For I wish I could have remained hidden in my corner. Second, as my conscience and many pious people can testify, I only brought forward the Gospel in opposition to the illusions or delusions of human traditions. And for so doing, I have suffered for three years, without cessation, all the malice which my adversaries could heap upon me. It was of no avail that I begged for mercy and promised henceforth to be silent. No attention was paid to my efforts after peace, and my urgent request to be better instructed was not listened to.

The one thing they insisted upon was that I should be extinguished. . . . Hence, O lord, prince of the kings of the earth, I fall humbly at your Serene Majesty's feet, begging you will not take me, but the cause of divine truth (for which cause only

[1] Written from Altenburg, March 3, 1519. [2] Currie, *Letters*, No. xl.

God has put the sword into your hand), under the shadow of your wings, protecting me till I have either won or lost the case.

Should I then be declared a heretic I ask for no protection, and only plead that neither the truth nor the lie be condemned unheard. For this is only due to your imperial throne. This will adorn your Majesty's empire! It will consecrate your century and cause its memory never to be forgotten, if your Sacred Majesty does not permit the wicked to swallow up him who is holier than they, nor let men, as the prophet says, "become as the fishes of the sea — as the creeping things that have no ruler over them." [1]

110. To George Spalatin [2]

You ask what I shall do if the emperor demands my presence at Worms. . . . If they use force toward me, which is probable, for they will not summon me in order to be enlightened, then the cause must be committed to God, who still reigns — to Him who upheld the three youths in the king of Babylon's fiery furnace. But if He will not deliver me, then my head is of no importance compared to the shameful death which was meted out to Christ. For, in a matter such as this, neither danger nor prosperity must be considered — for we must only see that the Gospel is not turned into ridicule by the godless through our conduct — or that our opponents should be able to boast that we had not the heart to confess, nor the courage to shed our blood, for the doctrines we taught. May the merciful Jesus guard us from such cowardice, and them from such boasting.

We cannot tell whether our life or death may be most beneficial to the Gospel. You know that the truth of God is a rock of offense set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. We have only to pray God that Charles's reign may not be desecrated through the shedding of my blood or that of anyone else. As I have often said, I would rather perish in papal hands

[1] Written from Wittenberg, January 15, 1520. [2] Currie, *Letters*, No. li.

than have him and his entangled in this matter. I know the misfortunes that befell the emperor Sigismund through Huss's murder. He never after had any good fortune — dying without children — and his name was blotted out, while his consort Barbara became a reproach among queens. But if it be decreed that I am to be delivered, not only to the high priests, but to the heathen, the will of the Lord be done. Amen.

This is my opinion and counsel. You can fancy anything of me but flight or recantation. I shall not flee, and much less recant, if the Lord Jesus gives me the power thereto. For I could do neither without danger to holiness and the welfare of many souls.[1]

111. To George Spalatin [2]

We come, my dear Spalatin, although Satan has tried to prevent me through illness. For the whole way from Eisenach to Frankfort I have been very weak, and am still much weaker than I ever felt before.

But I also perceive that the emperor Charles's mandate has been printed in order to fill me with fear. But Christ lives! We shall enter Worms in defiance of the gates of hell and all the powers of the air!

When once there we shall see what is to be done, and Satan need not puff himself up, for we have every intention of frightening and despising him. So get a lodging ready for me.[3]

112. To Philip Melanchthon [4]

And you, my Philip, what are you about meantime? Are you praying that my enforced seclusion may draw down some great thing to the glory of God, and therefore I wish to know if you approve of it. I feared it might look as if I was fleeing from the conflict, but I thought it best to give in to those who had arranged it thus. I long earnestly to encounter my enemies and vanquish them in the strife.

[1] Written from Wittenberg, December 21, 1520.
[2] Currie, *Letters*, No. lvi.
[3] Written from Frankfort, April 14, 1521.
[4] Currie, *Letters*, No. lix.

While sitting here, I ponder all day on the state of the churches as represented in the 88th Psalm. "Why hast Thou made all men in vain?" . . . I lament my hard-heartedness, that I do not weep rivers over the destruction of the daughters of my people. Is there no one who will arise and plead with God, or become a wall for the defense of the house of Israel, in these last days of the wrath of God? Therefore be up and doing, ye servants of the Word, and build up the walls and towers of Jerusalem till they close round about you. You know your calling and gifts. I pray earnestly for you, if my prayers may avail (which I hope they may). Do the same for me, and let us share this burden.

We are still alone upon the field. When they are done with me, they will seek you.

Spalatin writes that a terrible edict has been issued, making it a matter of conscience for every one to search out my writings and destroy them. . . . The emperor has also beeen instigated to write to the king of Denmark not to favor the Lutheran heresy, and my enemies now chant, "When will he be destroyed, and his name perish?" . . . But God lives and reigns to all eternity. Amen. God has visited me with great bodily suffering. I have not slept all night, and had no rest. Pray for me, as this evil will become unbearable if it goes on increasing as it has hitherto done.[1]

113. To His Father, Hans Luther[2]

It is almost sixteen years since I took the monk's vows without your knowledge or consent. You feared the weakness of my flesh, for I was a young fellow of twenty-two and full of fire, and you know the monkish life is fatal to many, and you were anxious to arrange a rich marriage for me. And for long this fear and anxiety made you deaf to those who begged you to be reconciled to me and to give God your dearest and best. But at last you gave way, although you did not lay aside your

[1] Written from the Wartburg, May 12, 1521. [2] Currie, *Letters*, No. lxix.

care. I well remember telling you I was called through a terrible apparition from heaven, so that, when face to face with death, I made the vow, and you exclaimed, "God grant it was not an apparition of the Evil One that startled you." The words sank into my heart as if God had uttered them, but I hardened my heart against it till you exclaimed, "Hast thou never heard that one should obey his parents?" In spite of this most powerful word I ever heard out of a human mouth, I persevered in my own righteousness and despised you as being only a man. . . .

Dear father, do you ask me to renounce monkish orders? God has been before you, and has brought me out Himself . . . and has placed me, as thou seest . . . in the true divine worship, for no one can doubt that I serve God's Word. Parental authority must yield before this divine service; for, "whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," says Christ. Not that parental authority ceases with this; but where Christ's authority clashes with that of a parent, the latter must give way.

Therefore I send you this book, from which you will see how miraculously Christ has redeemed me from my monkish vows. He has endowed me with such freedom that, although I am the servant of all men, I am subject to Him alone. For He is my sole Bishop, Abbot, Prior, Lord, Father, Master! I know no other.[1] . . .

[1] Written from Wittenberg, November 21, 1521.

CHAPTER XXIV

ENGLAND IN THE AGE OF ELIZABETH[1]

THE *Description of England*, by William Harrison, is a most valuable survey, political, social, and religious, of Elizabethan England. The work, which was published in 1577, contains an extended account of the food, dress, houses, and furniture of the people, besides notices of laws and punishments, treatment of the poor, fairs and markets, churches, universities, the army and navy, and a great variety of other topics. Harrison was a learned, kind-hearted, truth-seeking man, not afraid to expose what he regarded as the shams and follies of his day, but a lover of his country and proud of the achievements of Englishmen. He lived during a great age, and this is mirrored in the pages of his often amusing and always informing book.

114. Food and Diet[2]

In number of dishes and change of meat the nobility of England (whose cooks are for the most part musical-headed Frenchmen and strangers) do most exceed, since there is no day that passeth over their heads wherein they have not only beef, mutton, veal, lamb, kid, pork, cony, capon, pig, or so many of these as the season yieldeth, but also some portion of the red or fallow deer, besides great variety of fish, wild fowl, and sundry other delicacies. For a man to dine with one of them and to taste of every dish that standeth before him . . . is rather to yield unto a conspiracy with a great deal of meat for

[1] William Harrison's *Elizabethan England*, edited by Lothrop Withington. London, 1889. Walter Scott Publishing Co.

[2] Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, pp. 88–93.

the speedy suppression of natural health than to satisfy himself with a sufficient repast to sustain his body. But, as this large feeding is not seen in their guests, no more is it in their own persons; for, since they have daily much resort unto their tables (and many times unlooked for), and thereto retain great numbers of servants, it is very requisite and expedient for them to provide somewhat plentifully. . . .

The gentlemen and merchants have much the same custom. Each of them contenteth himself with four, five, or six dishes, when they have but small resort, or peradventure with one, or two, or three at the most, when they have no strangers to accompany them at their tables. . . . To be short, at such times as the merchants make their ordinary or voluntary feasts, it is wonderful to see what provision is made of all manner of delicate meats, from every quarter of the country, wherein, beside that they are often comparable herein to the nobility of the land, they will seldom regard anything that the butcher usually killeth, but reject the same as not worthy to come in place. In such cases, also, jellies of all colors, tarts, preserves of old fruits, foreign and home-bred, marmalades, sugar-bread, gingerbread, wild fowls, venison of all sorts, and outlandish confections, altogether seasoned with sugar (a device not common nor greatly used in old time at the table, but only in medicine), do generally bear the sway, besides infinite devices of our own not possible for me to remember. Of the potato, and such roots as are brought out of Spain, Portugal, and the Indies to furnish up our banquets, I speak not. . . .

But among all these, the kind of meat which is obtained with most difficulty and cost is commonly taken for the most delicate, and thereupon each guest will soonest desire to feed.

115. Apparel and Attire [1]

An Englishman, once endeavoring to write of our attire, made sundry platforms for his purpose, supposing by some of them to find out one steadfast ground whereon to build the

[1] Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, pp. 107–110.

sum of his discourse. But in the end (like an orator long without exercise), when he saw what a difficult piece of work he had taken in hand, he gave over his labor, and only drew the picture of a naked man, unto whom he gave a pair of shears in the one hand and a piece of cloth in the other, to the end he should shape his apparel after such fashion as himself liked, since he could find no kind of garment that could please him; and this he called an Englishman. Certainly this writer showed himself herein not to be altogether void of judgment, since the folly of our nation (even from the courtier to the carter) is such that no form of apparel pleaseth us longer than the first garment is in the wearing, if it continue so long. . . .

Oh, how much cost is bestowed nowadays upon our bodies, and how little upon our souls! How many suits of apparel hath the one and how little furniture hath the other! How much time is spent in decking up the first, and how little space left wherein to feed the latter! How curious, how finical, also, are a number of men and women, and how hardly can the tailor please them in making clothing fit for their bodies! How many times must it be sent back again to him that made it! What chafing, what fretting, what reproachful language doth the poor workman bear away! And many times when he doeth nothing to it at all, yet when it is brought home again it is very fit and handsome; then must we put it on, then must the long seams of our hose be set by a plumb-line, then we puff, then we blow, and finally sweat till we drop, that our clothes may stand well upon us. I will say nothing of our hair, which sometimes is cut short, sometimes curled, sometimes allowed to grow in length like a woman's locks, and many times cut off, above or under the ears, round as by a wooden dish. Neither will I meddle with our variety of beards, of which some are shaven from the chin like those of Turks, not a few cut short, some made round like a rubbing brush, or now and then suffered to grow long, the barbers being grown to be so cunning in this behalf as the tailors. . . . Many old men do wear no beards at all. Some lusty courtiers also and gentlemen of courage

do wear either rings of gold, stones, or pearl, in their ears, whereby they imagine the workmanship of God to be not a little improved. . . . In women, also, it is most to be lamented, that they do now far exceed the lightness of our men (who nevertheless are transformed from the cap even to the very shoe), and such staring attire as in time past was supposed proper for none but light housewives only is now became a habit for chaste and sober matrons.

116. Houses and Furniture [1]

The greatest part of our building in the cities and towns of England consisteth only of timber, for as yet few of the houses are made of stone, although they may be builded as cheaply of the one as of the other. . . . In like sort as every country house is thus appareled on the outside, so is it inwardly divided into sundry rooms above and beneath; and, where plenty of wood is, they cover the roofs with tiles, otherwise with straw, sedge, or reed, unless some quarry of slate be near at hand. . . . The walls of our houses on the inner sides are either hung with tapestry, arras work, or painted cloths. . . or else they are ceiled with oak of our own, or wainscot brought hither out of the east countries, whereby the rooms are made warm and much more close than otherwise they would be. As for stoves, we have not hitherto used them greatly, yet do they now begin to appear in houses of the gentry and wealthy citizens. . . .

Of old time, our country houses, instead of glass, did use much lattice, and that made either of wicker or fine rifts of oak in checkerwise. I read also that some of the better sort, in and before the times of the Saxons . . . did make panels of horn instead of glass. But as horn in windows is now quite given up in every place, so our lattices are also grown into less use, because glass is come to be so plentiful. . . .

The furniture of our houses also is grown in manner even to passing delicacy; and herein I do not speak of the nobility and gentry only, but likewise of the lowest sort in most places

[1] Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, pp. 113–119.

of our south country that have anything at all to take to. Certainly in noblemen's houses it is not rare to see abundance of arras, rich hangings of tapestry, silver vessels, and so much other plate as may furnish sundry cupboards to the sum oftentimes of a thousand or two thousand pounds at the least, whereby the value of this and the rest of their stuff doth grow to be almost inestimable. Likewise in the houses of knights, gentlemen, merchants, and some other wealthy citizens, it is not unusual to behold their great provision of tapestry, Turkey work, pewter, brass, fine linen, and costly cupboards of plate, worth five or six hundred or a thousand pounds. . . .

There are old men yet dwelling in the village where I remain who have noted three things to be marvelously altered in England within their remembrance.

One is the multitude of chimneys lately erected, whereas in their young days there were not above two or three, if so many, in most towns of the realm. . . . Each one made his fire against a reredos in the hall, where he dined and dressed his meat.

The second is the great improvement of lodging; for, said they, our fathers, yea and we ourselves also, have lain full oft upon straw pallets, on rough mats covered only with a sheet, under coarse shaggy coverlets, and a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster or pillow. If it were so that the good man of the house had within seven years after his marriage purchased a mattress and thereto a stack of chaff to rest his head upon, he thought himself to be as well lodged as the lord of the town, that peradventure lay seldom in a bed of down or whole feathers. . . . As for servants, if they had any sheet above them, it was well, for seldom had they any under their bodies to keep them from the pricking straws that ran oft through the canvas of the pallet and scratched their hardened hides.

The third thing they tell of is the exchange of vessels, as of wooden platters into pewter, and wooden spoons into silver or tin.

117. Beggars [1]

It is not yet full threescore years since the trade of begging began, but how it hath prospered since that time it is easy to judge, for the beggars are now supposed, of one sex and another, to amount unto above 10,000 persons, as I have heard reported. Moreover, they have devised a language among themselves, which they name "Canting," but others, "peddler's French," a speech compact of English and a great number of odd words of their own devising, without any order or reason, and yet such is it as none but themselves are able to understand. The first deviser thereof was hanged by the neck — a just reward, no doubt, for his deserts, and a common end to all of that profession.

The punishment that is ordained for this kind of people is very sharp, and yet it cannot restrain them from their gadding. . . . What notable robberies, pilferies, murders, and stealings of young children, burning, breaking, and disfiguring their limbs to make them pitiful in the sight of the people, I need not rehearse; but for their idle tramping about the country, the law ordaineth this manner of correction. The rogue being apprehended, committed to prison, and tried in the next assizes, if he happen to be convicted for a vagabond . . . is then immediately adjudged to be whipped and burned through the gristle of the right ear with a hot iron, as a manifestation of his wicked life, and due punishment received for the same. And this judgment is to be executed upon him, unless some honest person, worth five pounds in the queen's books in goods, or twenty shillings in land, or some rich householder will be bound in recognizance to retain him in his service for one whole year. If he be taken the second time, and proved to have forsaken his said service, he shall then be whipped again, bored likewise through the other ear, and set to service; from whence if he depart before a year be expired, and happen afterwards to be attached again, he is condemned to suffer pains of death as a felon.

[1] Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, pp. 127–129.

118. Robbers [1]

I might here speak of the excessive staves which many people who travel by the way do carry upon their shoulders, whereof some are twelve or thirteen feet long, beside the pike of twelve inches; but, as they are commonly suspected by honest men to be thieves and robbers, so by reason of this and the like suspicious weapons the honest traveler is now forced to ride with a case of pistols at his saddle-bow, or with some pretty short snapper, whereby he may deal with them further off in his own defense, before he come within reach of these weapons.

No man traveleth by the way without his sword, or some such weapon, except the minister, who commonly weareth none at all, unless it be a dagger or hanger at his side. Seldom are they or any other wayfaring men robbed, without the consent of the chamberlain, tapster, or hostler where they bait and lie, who . . . see their store in drawing of their purses and give intimation to some one or other attendant daily in the yard or house, dwelling hard by, whether the prey be worth the following or no. If it be for their turn, then the gentleman peradventure is asked which way he traveleth, and whether it please him to have another guest to bear him company at supper, who rideth the same way in the morning that he doeth, or not. And thus if he admit him, or be glad of his acquaintance, the cheat is half wrought. And often it is seen that the new guest shall be robbed with the old, only to color out the matter and keep him from suspicion. Sometimes, when they know which way the passenger traveleth, they will either go before and lie in wait for him, or else come galloping apace after, whereby they will be sure, if he ride not the stronger, to be fingering with his purse. And these are some of the policies of such shrews or close-booted gentlemen as lie in wait for prizes by the highways, and which are most commonly practiced in the winter season, about the feast of Christmas, when serving-men and unthrifty gentlemen want money to play at the dice and cards, lewdly spending in

[1] Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, pp. 227–228.

such wise whatsoever they have wickedly gotten, till some of them be hanged at Tyburn,[1] which happeneth unto them commonly before they come to middle age. Whereby it appeareth that some sort of youth will oft have his swing, although it be in a halter.

119. Punishments [2]

In cases of felony, manslaughter, robbery, murder, piracy, and such capital crimes as are not reputed for treason or hurt of the estate, our sentence pronounced upon the offender is, to hang till he be dead. For of other punishments used in other countries we have no knowledge or use; and yet not so many grievous crimes are committed among us as elsewhere in the world. To use torment also or question by pain and torture in these common cases with us is greatly abhorred . . . for our nation is free, stout, haughty, prodigal of life and blood, and therefore cannot in any wise endure to be used as villains and slaves, in suffering continually beating, servitude, and servile torments. No, our jailors are guilty of felony, by an old law of the land, if they torment any prisoner committed to their custody for the revealing of his accomplices.

The greatest and most grievous punishment used in England for such as offend against the State is drawing from the prison to the place of execution upon an hurdle or sled, where they are hanged till they be half dead, and then taken down and quartered alive. . . . Sometimes, if the trespass be not the more heinous, they are suffered to hang till they be quite dead. We have use neither for the wheel nor for the bar, as in other countries, but, when willful manslaughter is perpetrated, besides hanging, the offender hath his right hand commonly stricken off before or near unto the place where the act was done, after which he is led forth to the place of execution and there put to death according to the law. . . .

If a woman poison her husband, she is burned alive; if the servant kill his master, he is to be executed for petty trea-

[1] The place of execution in old London.

[2] Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, pp. 237–245.

son. . . . Perjury is punished by the pillory, burning in the forehead with the letter P, and loss of all the offender's movables. Many trespasses also are punished by the cutting off of one or both ears from the head of the culprit. Rogues are burned through the ears; carriers of sheep out of the land, by the loss of their hands; such as kill by poison are either boiled or scalded to death in lead or seething water. Heretics are burned quick. . . . Such as kill themselves are buried in the field with a stake driven through their bodies. Witches are hanged, or sometimes burned. . . . Rogues and vagabonds are often stocked and whipped; scolds are ducked upon ducking-stools in the water. Such felons as stand mute, and speak not at their arraignment, are pressed to death by huge weights laid upon a board, that lieth over their breasts, and a sharp stone under their backs; and these commonly hold their peace, thereby to save their goods unto their wives and children, which, if they were condemned, would be confiscated. . . . Pirates are condemned in the court of the admiralty, and hanged on the shore at low-water mark, where they are left till three tides have overwashed them. Finally, those who have banks and walls near unto the sea, and do suffer the same to decay, whereby the water entereth and drowneth up the country, are by a certain ancient custom staked in the breach, where they remain forever as parcel of the foundation of the new wall that is to be made upon them.

120. The Universities [1]

Some greedy gripers do gape for the lands of our noble universities, and of late have propounded sundry reasons whereby they supposed to have prevailed in their purposes. But who are those that have attempted this suit, other than such as either hate learning, piety, and wisdom, or else have spent all their own and know not otherwise than by encroaching upon other men how to maintain themselves? When such a motion was made by some unto King Henry the Eighth, he answered them in this manner: "Ah, sirra! I perceive the monastery

[1] Harrison, *Elizabethan England*, pp. 261–262.

lands have fleshed you, and set your teeth on edge, to ask also those colleges. And, whereas we had a regard only to pull down sin by defacing the monasteries, you have a desire also to over throw all goodness, by subversion of colleges. I tell you, sirs, that I judge no land in England better bestowed than that which is given to our universities; for by their maintenance our realm shall be well governed when we be dead. As you love your welfares, therefore, follow no more this vein, but content yourselves with that you have already, or else seek honest means whereby to increase your livelihoods; for I love not learning so ill that I will impair the revenues of any one house by a penny, whereby it may be upholden."

In King Edward the Sixth's days likewise the same suit was once again attempted, but in vain; for, saith the duke of Somerset, "If learning decay, which of wild men maketh civil; of blockish and rash persons, wise and goodly counselors; of obstinate rebels, obedient subjects; and of evil men, good and godly Christians; what shall we look for else but barbarism and tumult? When the lands of colleges have gone, it shall be hard to say whose staff shall stand next the door; for then I doubt not but the state of bishops, rich farmers, merchants, and the nobility, shall be assailed, by such as live to spend all, and think that whatsoever another man hath is more meet for them and to be at their commandment than for the proper owner that has sweat and labored for it." In Queen Mary's days the weather was too warm for any such course to be taken in hand; but in the time of our gracious Queen Elizabeth I hear that it was after a sort in talk the third time, but without success; and so I hope it shall continue forever. For what comfort should it be for any good man to see his country brought into the estate of the old Goths and Vandals, who made laws against learning and would not suffer any skillful man to come into their council house; by means whereof those people became savage tyrants and merciless hell-hounds, till they restored learning again and thereby fell to civility.

CHAPTER XXV

CHARACTERS AND EPISODES OF THE GREAT REBELLION [1]

THE *History of the Rebellion*, by Edward Hyde, first earl of Clarendon (1609–1674), is one of the great works of English literature. The book was not published until after Clarendon's death, but large parts of it were composed between 1646 and 1648, when the events described remained fresh in the author's memory. Clarendon belonged to the Royalist party and took an active part in political and military affairs during the stirring age of the Puritan Revolution. He writes, therefore, as a contemporary, and with evident bias, for he wished to justify the course followed by Charles I and the Royalists. In spite of this fact, the impression made on the reader's mind is one of the author's sincerity and honest conviction. As a writer of English prose, Clarendon stands very high. His character sketches of Laud, Strafford, Hampden, Charles I, Cromwell, and others form a gallery of portraits perhaps unmatched elsewhere in English historical writing.

121. Archbishop Laud [2]

It was within one week after the king's return from Scotland, that Abbot, archbishop of Canterbury, died at his house at Lambeth. And the king took very little time to consider who should be his successor, but the next time the bishop of London

[1] *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England, together with an Historical View of the Affairs of Ireland*, by Edward, Earl of Clarendon. 7 vols. Oxford, 1859. University Press.

[2] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. i, pp. 126–129.

came to him, His Majesty greeted him very cheerfully with the words, "My lord's grace of Canterbury, you are very welcome," and gave orders the same day for the dispatch of all the necessary forms for the translation. Within a month or thereabouts after the death of the other archbishop, he was completely invested in that high dignity, and settled in his palace at Lambeth. This great prelate had been before in high favor with the duke of Buckingham, whose confidant he was, and by him recommended to the king, as fittest to be trusted in conferring all ecclesiastical preferments, when he was but bishop of St. David's, or newly preferred to Bath and Wells; and from that time he entirely governed that province without a rival, so that his promotion to Canterbury was long foreseen and expected; nor was it attended with any increase of envy or dislike.

He was a man of great parts, and very exemplary virtues, allayed and discredited by some unpopular natural infirmities; the greatest of which was (besides a hasty, sharp way of expressing himself) that he believed innocence of heart and integrity of manners formed a guard strong enough to secure any man in his voyage through this world, in what company soever he traveled and through what ways soever he was to pass; and surely never any man was better supplied with that provision.

He was born of honest parents, who were well able to provide for his education in the schools of learning, whence they sent him to St. John's College in Oxford, the worst endowed at that time of any in that famous university. From a scholar he became a fellow, and then the president of that college, after he had received all the graces and degrees (the proctorship and the doctorship) which could be obtained there. He was always maligned and persecuted by those who were of the Calvinistic faction, which was then very powerful, and who, according to their useful maxim and practice, call every man they do not love, papist. Under this senseless appellation they created for him many troubles and vexations; and so far suppressed him, that, though he was the king's chaplain, and taken notice of for an excellent preacher and a scholar of the most sublime

parts, he had not any preferment to invite him to leave his poor college, which only gave him bread, till the vigor of his age was past. When he was promoted by King James, it was but to a poor bishopric in Wales, which was not so good a support for a bishop, as his college was for a private scholar, though a doctor.

Parliaments at that time were frequent, and grew very busy; and the party under which he had suffered a continual persecution appeared very powerful, and they who had the courage to oppose them began to be taken notice of with approbation and countenance. In this way he came to be first cherished by the duke of Buckingham, after the latter had made some experiments of the temper and spirit of the other people, not at all to his satisfaction. From this time he prospered at the rate of his own wishes, and being transplanted out of his cold barren diocese of St. David's, into a warmer climate, he was left, as was said before, by that omnipotent favorite in that great trust with the king, who was sufficiently indisposed toward the persons or the principles of Mr. Calvin's disciples.

When he came into great authority, it may be that he retained too keen a memory of those who had so unjustly and uncharitably persecuted him before; and, I doubt, was so far transported with the same passions he had reason to complain of in his adversaries, that, as they accused him of popery, because he had some doctrinal opinions which they liked not, though they were in no way allied to popery; so he entertained too much prejudice to some persons, as if they were enemies to the discipline of the Church, because they concurred with Calvin in some doctrinal points.

122. Trial of the Earl of Strafford [1]

All things being thus prepared and settled, on Monday, the twenty-second of March, 1641, the earl of Strafford was brought to the bar in Westminster Hall; the lords sitting in the middle of the hall in their robes; and the commoners, and some strangers of quality, with the Scotch commissioners, and the committee

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. i, pp. 306–308.

of Ireland, on either side. There was a close box made at one end, at a very convenient distance for hearing, in which the king and queen sat; His Majesty, out of kindness and curiosity, desiring to hear all that could be alleged. . . .

After his charge was read, and an introduction made by Mr. Pym, in which he called him "the wicked earl," some member of the House of Commons, being a lawyer, applied and pressed the evidence, with great sharpness of language; and, when the earl had made his defense, replied with the same liberty to whatsoever he said; taking all occasions of bitterly inveighing against his person. This reproachful way of acting was looked upon with so much approbation that one of the managers (Mr. Palmer) lost all his credit and interest with them, and never recovered it, for using a decency and modesty in his bearing and language toward him; though the weight of his arguments pressed more upon the earl than all the noise of the rest.

The trial lasted eighteen days. All the hasty or proud expressions he had uttered at any time since he was first made a privy councilor; all the acts of passion or power that he had exercised in Yorkshire, from the time that he was first president there; his engaging himself in projects in Ireland, . . . his billeting of soldiers and exercising of martial law in that kingdom, . . . some casual and light discourses at his own table and at public meetings; and lastly, some words spoken in secret council in this kingdom, after the dissolution of the last parliament, were urged and pressed against him, to make good the general charge of "an endeavor to overthrow the fundamental government of the kingdom and to introduce an arbitrary power."

The earl behaved himself with great show of humility and submission; but yet with such a kind of courage as would lose no advantage; and, in truth, made his defense with all imaginable dexterity; answering this and evading that, with all possible skill and eloquence. Though he knew not, till he came to the bar, upon what parts of his charge they would proceed against him, or what evidence they would produce, he took

very little time to recollect himself and left nothing unsaid that might make for his own justification.

123. Attainder and Execution of the Earl of Strafford [1]

The bill of attainder in few days passed the House of Commons; though some lawyers, of great and known learning, declared that there was no ground in law to judge him guilty of high treason. Lord Digby (who had been, from the beginning, of the committee for the prosecution, and had much more prejudice than kindness to the earl) in a speech declared that he could not give his consent to the bill; not only because he was unsatisfied in the matter of law, but also because he was more unsatisfied in the matter of fact; those words, upon which the impeachment was principally grounded, being so far from being proved by two witnesses, that he could not acknowledge it to be by one. . . . The bill passed with only fifty-nine dissenting votes, there being nearly two hundred in the House; and was immediately sent up to the Lords, with this addition, "that the House of Commons would be ready the next day in Westminster Hall to give their lordships satisfaction in the matter of law, upon what had passed at the trial."

The earl was then again brought to the bar; the lords sitting as before, in their robes; and the commoners as they had done; amongst them, Mr. St. John (whom his majesty had made his Solicitor-General since the beginning of the parliament), argued for the space of nearly an hour the matter of law. Of the argument itself I shall say little, it being in print and in many hands; I shall only mention two notable propositions, which are sufficient indications of the person and the time. Lest what had been said on the earl's behalf, in point of law and upon the want of proof, should have made any impression on their lordships, he averred that private satisfaction to each man's conscience was sufficient, although no evidence had been given in at all; and as to the pressing the law, he said, "It was true

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. i, pp. 325–327, 361–364.

we give law to hares and deer, because they are beasts of chase; but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock foxes and wolves on the head as they are found, because they are beasts of prey." In a word, the law and the humanity were alike; the one being more fallacious, and the other more barbarous, than in any age had been vented in such an audience chamber.

The same day, as a better argument to the House of Lords speedily to pass the bill, the nine and fifty members of the House of Commons, who had dissented from that act, had their names written on pieces of parchment or paper, under this superscription, "Straffordians, or enemies to their country;" and these papers were fixed upon posts and the most visible places about the city. This action was as great and destructive a violation of the privileges and freedom of parliament as can be imagined: yet, being complained of in the House, not the least countenance was given to the complaint or the least care taken for the discovery of the guilty parties.

During these perplexities the earl of Strafford, taking notice of the straits the king was in, the rage of the people still increasing (from whence he might expect a certain outrage and ruin, how constant soever the king continued to him) . . . wrote a most pathetic letter to the king, full of acknowledgement of his favors; but presenting "the dangers which threatened himself and his posterity, by his obstinacy in those favors;" and therefore by many arguments imploring him "no longer to defer his assent to the bill, that so his death might free the kingdom from the many troubles it apprehended."

The delivery of this letter being quickly known, new arguments were used to overcome the opposition of the king. He was told that this free consent of Strafford's clearly absolved him from any further scruples about the execution of the earl. In the end they extorted from him an order to some lords to pass the bill; which was as valid as if he had signed it himself; though they comforted him even with that circumstance, "that his own hand was not in it." . . .

All things being thus transacted, to conclude the fate of this great person, he was on the twelfth day of May brought from the Tower of London (where he had been a prisoner nearly six months) to the scaffold on Tower Hill. Here, with a composed, undaunted courage, he told the people that he had come thither to satisfy them with his head; but that he much feared the reformation which was begun in blood would not prove so fortunate to the kingdom as they expected and he wished. After great expressions of his devotion to the Church of England, and the Protestant religion established by law and professed in that Church; of his loyalty to the king, and affection for the peace and welfare of the kingdom, with marvelous tranquillity of mind he delivered his head to the block, where it was severed from his body at a blow. Many of the bystanders who had not been over-charitable to him in his life, were much affected by the courage and Christianity of his death.

124. John Hampden [1]

He was a gentleman of a good family in Buckinghamshire, born to a fair fortune, and of a most civil and affable deportment. In his earlier years, he indulged himself in all the sports, exercises, and company which were used by men of the most jolly conversation. Afterwards he retired to a more reserved and melancholic society, yet preserving his own natural cheerfulness and vivacity, and above all a flowing courtesy to all men.... He was rather of reputation in his own county than of public discourse or fame in the kingdom before the business of ship-money; but then he grew the argument of all tongues, every man inquiring who and what he was, that durst, at his own charge, support the liberty and property of the kingdom and rescue his country from being made a prey to the court. His carriage, throughout that agitation, was with such rare temper and modesty, that they who watched him narrowly to find some advantage against his person, to make

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. iii, pp. 67–69.

him less resolute in his cause, were compelled to give him a just testimony.

The judgment that was given against him infinitely more advanced him than the service for which it was given. When this parliament began (being returned knight of the shire for the county where he lived), the eyes of all men were fixed on him as the pilot that must steer their vessel through the tempests and rocks which threatened it. And I am persuaded his power and interest, at that time, was greater to do good or hurt than any man's in the kingdom, or than any man of his rank has had in any time; for his reputation for honesty was universal, and his affections seemed so publicly guided that no corrupt or private ends could bias them.

He was of that rare affability and temper in debate, and of that seeming humility and submission of judgment, as if he brought no opinions with him but a desire of information and instruction. Yet he had so subtle a way of interrogating, and under the notion of doubts insinuating his objections, that he left his opinions with those from whom he pretended to learn and receive them. And even with them who were able to preserve themselves from his influence, and discerned those opinions to be fixed in him with which they could not comply, he always left the character of an ingenuous and conscientious person. He was indeed a very wise man, and of great parts, and possessed with the most absolute faculties to govern the people, of any man I ever knew.

125. Trial of King Charles I[1]

When he was first brought to Westminster Hall, which was upon the twentieth of January, 1649, before the high court of justice, he looked upon them and sat down, without any manifestation of trouble, never doffing his hat. All the impudent judges sat covered and fixed their eyes upon him, without the least show of respect. The odious libel, which they called a charge and impeachment, was then read by the clerk.

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. v, pp. 532–537.

It asserted that he had been admitted king of England and trusted with a limited power to govern according to law; and by his oath and office was obliged to use the power committed to him for the good and benefit of the people; but that he had, out of a wicked design to erect to himself an unlimited and tyrannical power and to overthrow the rights and liberties of the people, traitorously levied war against the present parliament and the people therein represented. . . . It was also charged that he had been the author and contriver of the unnatural, cruel, and bloody war; and was therefore guilty of all the treasons, murders, rapines, burnings, spoils, desolations, damage, and mischief to the nation, which had been committed in the said war or been occasioned thereby. He was therefore impeached for the said treasons and crimes, on the behalf of the people of England, as a tyrant, traitor, and murderer, and a public, implacable enemy to the commonwealth of England. And it was prayed that he might be put to answer to all the particulars, to the end that such an examination, trial, and judgment might be had thereupon as should be agreeable to justice.

The impeachment having been read, their president, Bradshaw, after he had insolently reprimanded the king for not having doffed his hat or showed more respect to that high tribunal, told him that the parliament of England had appointed that court to try him for the several treasons and misdemeanors which he had committed against the kingdom during the evil administration of his government, and that upon the examination thereof justice might be done. And after a great sauciness and impudence of talk, he asked the king what answer he made to that impeachment.

The king, without any alteration in his countenance by all that insolent provocation, told them he would first know of them by what authority they presumed by force to bring him before them, and who gave them power to judge of his actions, for which he was accountable to none but God; though they had always been such as he need not be ashamed to own before all the world. He told them that he was their king and they

his subjects, who owed him duty and obedience; that no parliament had authority to call him before them; and that they were not even the parliament, and had no authority from the parliament to sit in that manner. . . . And after urging their duty that was due to him, and his superiority over them by such lively reasons and arguments as were not capable of any answer, he concluded that he would not so much betray himself and his royal dignity as to answer anything they objected against him, which would be to acknowledge their authority. . . .

Bradshaw advised him in a very arrogant manner not to deceive himself with an opinion that anything he had said would do him any good; that the parliament knew their own authority and would not suffer it to be called in question and debated. Bradshaw therefore wished him to think better of it when he should be next brought thither and that he would answer directly to his charge; otherwise he could not be so ignorant as not to know what judgment the law pronounced against those who stood mute and obstinately refused to plead. And so the guard carried His Majesty back to St. James's, where they treated him as before. . . .

As there were many persons present at that woeful spectacle who felt a real compassion for the king, so there were others of so barbarous and brutal a behavior toward him that they called him tyrant and murderer; and one spat in his face; which His Majesty without expressing any resentment wiped off with his handkerchief. . . .

The several unheard-of insolences which this excellent prince was forced to submit to at the other times he was brought before that odious judicatory, his majestic behavior under so much insolence, and resolute insisting upon his own dignity, and defending it by manifest authorities in the law, as well as by the clearest deductions from reason, the pronouncing that horrible sentence upon the most innocent person in the world, the execution of that sentence by the most execrable murder that ever was committed since that of our blessed Savior, and the

circumstances thereof . . . the saint-like behavior of that blessed martyr, and his Christian courage and patience at his death, are all particulars so well known . . . that the farther mentioning them in this place would but afflict and grieve the reader, and make the relation itself odious; and therefore no more shall be said here of that lamentable tragedy, so much to the dishonor of the nation and the religion professed by it.

126. Oliver Cromwell [1]

He was one of those men whom his very enemies could not condemn without commending him at the same time: for he could never have done half that mischief without great courage and industry and judgment. And he must have had a wonderful understanding of the natures and passions of men, and as great a dexterity in the applying them, who, from a private and obscure birth (although of a good family), without interest of estate, alliance, or friendships, could raise himself to such a height. . . . Without doubt, no man with more wickedness ever attempted anything or brought to pass what he desired more wickedly, more in the face and contempt of religion and moral honesty; yet wickedness as great as his could never have accomplished these results without the assistance of a great spirit, an admirable circumspection and sagacity, and a most magnanimous resolution. When he appeared first in parliament, he seemed to have a person in no degree gracious, no ornament of discourse, none of those talents which reconcile the affection of the bystanders; yet as he grew into place and authority, his powers seemed to be renewed, as if he had concealed faculties, till he had occasion to use them; and when he was to act the part of a great man, he did it without any awkwardness through the lack of experience.

After he was confirmed and invested Protector, he consulted with very few upon any action of importance, nor communicated any enterprise he resolved upon with more than those who

[1] Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, vol. vi, pp. 103–110.

were to have principal parts in the execution of it; nor to them sooner than was absolutely necessary. What he once resolved, in which he was not rash, he would not be dissuaded from, nor endure any contradiction of his power and authority, but extorted obedience from those who were not willing to yield it. . . .

Thus he subdued a spirit that had been often troublesome to the most sovereign power, and made Westminster Hall obedient and subservient to his commands. In all other matters, which did not concern the life of his jurisdiction, he seemed to have great reverence for the law and rarely interposed between party and party. And as he proceeded with this kind of indignation and haughtiness with those who were refractory and dared to contend with his greatness, so toward those who complied with his good pleasure and courted his protection, he used a wonderful civility, generosity, and bounty.

To reduce three nations,[1] which perfectly hated him, to an entire obedience to all his dictates; to awe and govern those nations by an army that was not devoted to him and wished his ruin, was an instance of a very prodigious genius. But his greatness at home was but a shadow of the glory he had abroad. It was hard to discover which feared him most, France, Spain, or the Low Countries, where his friendship was current at the value he put upon it. And as they did all sacrifice their honor and their interest to his pleasure, so there is nothing he could have demanded that they would have denied him. . . .

He was not a man of blood, and totally declined Machiavelli's method,[2] which prescribes, upon any alteration of a government, to cut off all the heads and extirpate the families of those who are friends to the old one. And it was confidently reported that in the council of officers it was more than once proposed that there might be a general massacre of all the royal party,

[1] England, Scotland, and Ireland.

[2] Machiavelli (1469–1527), an Italian diplomat, was the author of a famous book, *Il Principe* (*The Prince*), which exercised much influence on European politics. It is an analysis of the methods whereby an ambitious and unscrupulous man may rise to sovereign power.

as the only expedient to secure the government; but Cromwell would never consent to it; it may be, out of too much contempt of his enemies. In a word, as he had all the wickednesses against which damnation is denounced, and for which hell fire is prepared, so he had some virtues which have caused the memory of some men in all ages to be celebrated; and he will be looked upon by posterity as a brave bad man.

CHAPTER XXVI

OLIVER CROMWELL[1]

In 1845 the famous English writer, Thomas Carlyle, gave to the world the first collection ever made of Cromwell's letters and speeches. The work had an immediate success and within a few years totally changed the current estimate of Cromwell. Until it appeared, even historians favorable to the Puritan Revolution had been accustomed to represent Cromwell as a patriot in the first part of his career and a tyrant in the last part. But now no one could study the life of the great Protector, as given in his own words, without being convinced of his honesty and sincerity of purpose. By thus redeeming Cromwell's memory, by proving that he was "not a man of falsehoods but a man of truths," Carlyle restored him to his proper place among English worthies.

127. Battle of Marston Moor[2]

The Civil War between Charles I and parliament broke out in 1642. Fortune at first favored the Royalists, and it was not till Cromwell appeared as a military leader that the Puritans had any conspicuous success. At a critical moment in the battle of Marston Moor (1644) Cromwell hurled his "Ironsides" against the Royalists under Prince Rupert and gained a decisive victory. All the north of England now fell into the hands of parliament and the Scots. Cromwell refers to the battle in a letter of condolence which he wrote to Colonel Walton, whose son had been killed.

. . . Truly England and the Church of God hath had a great favor from the Lord, in this great victory given unto us, such

[1] *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, edited by Thomas Carlyle, revised by S. C. Lomas. 3 vols. London, 1904. Methuen and Co.

[2] Cromwell, *Letters and Speeches*, vol. i, pp. 176–177.

as the like never was since this war began. It had all the evidences of an absolute victory obtained by the Lord's blessing upon the godly party principally. We never charged but we routed the enemy. The left wing, which I commanded, being our own cavalry, except a few Scots in our rear, beat all the prince's cavalry. God made them as stubble to our swords. . . . The particulars I cannot relate now, but I believe, of twenty thousand the prince hath not four thousand left. Give glory, all the glory, to God.

Sir, God hath taken away your eldest son by a cannon shot. It broke his leg. We were obliged to have it cut off, whereof he died. . . . He was a gallant young man, exceeding gracious. God give you His comfort. Before his death he was so full of comfort that to Frank Russel and myself he could not express it, it was so great above his pain. This he said to us. Indeed it was admirable. A little after, he said one thing lay upon his spirit. I asked him what that was. He told me that it was that God had not suffered him to be no more the executioner of His enemies. At his fall, his horse being killed with the bullet, and as I am informed three horses more, I am told he bid them open to the right and left, that he might see the rogues run. Truly he was exceedingly beloved in the army, of all that knew him. But few knew him, for he was a precious young man, fit for God. You have cause to bless the Lord. He is a glorious saint in Heaven, wherein you ought exceedingly to rejoice. Let this drink up your sorrow; seeing these are not feigned words to comfort you, but the thing is so real and undoubted a truth. You may do all things by the strength of Christ. Seek that, and you shall easily bear your trial. Let this public mercy to the Church of God make you to forget your private sorrow. The Lord be your strength.

128. Battle of Naseby [1]

At Naseby in 1645 a dashing charge by Cromwell's cavalry again turned threatened defeat into victory. The Royalists never recovered

[1] Cromwell, *Letters and Speeches*, vol. i, pp. 204–205.

from the reverse which they experienced here, and within less than a year Charles I was a prisoner in the hands of the Scots. After the battle Cromwell wrote about it to the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Being commanded by you to this service, I think myself bound to acquaint you with the good hand of God toward you and us.

We marched yesterday after the king . . . and encamped about six miles from him. This day we marched toward him. He drew out to meet us; both armies engaged. We, after three hours' fight very doubtful, at last routed his army; killed and took about five thousand, very many officers, but of what quality we yet know not. We took also about two hundred carriages, all he had; and all his guns. . . . We pursued the enemy from three miles short of Harborough to nine beyond, even to the sight of Leicester, whither the king fled.

Sir, this is none other but the hand of God; and to Him alone belongs the glory, wherein none are to share with Him. The general served you with all faithfulness and honor; and the best commendation I can give him is that I dare say he attributes all to God, and would rather perish than assume to himself. . . . Honest men served you faithfully in this action. Sir, they are trusty; I beseech you in the name of God not to discourage them. I wish this action may beget thankfulness and humility in all that are concerned in it. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he may trust God for the liberty of his conscience, and you for the liberty he fights for.

129. Storming of Drogheda [1]

After the execution of Charles I in 1649 Roman Catholics in Ireland combined with Protestant Royalists in an attempt to overthrow the Commonwealth. Cromwell promptly invaded Ireland and spread fire and sword throughout the island. His treatment of the garrison of Drogheda has left a stain on his memory.

Upon Tuesday the 10th of September, about five o'clock in the evening, we began the storm, and after some hot dis-

[1] Cromwell, *Letters and Speeches*, vol. i, pp. 467–470.

pute we entered with about seven or eight hundred men, the enemy disputing it very stiffly with us. And indeed, through the advantages of the place, and the courage God was pleased to give the defenders, our men were forced to retreat quite out of the breach, not without some considerable loss. . . .

Although our men that stormed the breaches were forced to recoil, as before is expressed, yet, being encouraged to recover their loss, they made a second attempt, wherein God was pleased so to animate them that they got ground of the enemy and forced him to quit his entrenchments. And after a very hot dispute, the enemy having both horse and foot, and we only foot, within the wall, they gave ground, and our men became masters both of their entrenchments and the church. . . .

The enemy retreated, many of them, into the Mill-Mount: a place very strong and of difficult access, being exceedingly high and strongly palisaded. The governor, Sir Arthur Ashton, and other important officers being there, our men getting up to them, were ordered by me to put them all to the sword. And indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town. That night, I think, they put to the sword about two thousand men. Many officers and soldiers fled over the bridge into the other part of the town, where about one hundred of them possessed St. Peter's church-steeple, some the west gate, and others a strong round tower next the gate called St. Sunday's. These being summoned to yield to mercy, refused, whereupon I ordered the steeple of St. Peter's Church to be fired, where one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames: "God condemn me, God confound me; I burn, I burn."

The next day, the other two towers were summoned, in one of which were about six or seven score; but they refused to yield themselves, and we, knowing that hunger must compel them, set only good guards to secure them from running away until their stomachs were come down. From one of the said towers, notwithstanding their condition, they killed and wounded some of our men. When they submitted, their officers were

knocked on the head, and every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped to the Barbadoes. The soldiers in the other tower were all spared and shipped likewise to the Barbadoes.

I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood; and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future, which are the satisfactory grounds for such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret. The officers and soldiers of this garrison were the flower of all their army, and their great expectation was that our attempting this place would put fair to ruin us, they being confident of the resolution of their men and the advantage of the place.

130. Rejection of the Kingship [1]

In 1653 Cromwell became Lord Protector of England. The position carried with it royal duties and responsibilities, but Cromwell would not accept the title of king. On this point he expressed himself to parliament as follows:

I confess that this business hath put the House, the parliament, to a great deal of trouble, and spent much time. I am very sorry for that. It hath cost me some time too, and some thoughts; and because I have been the unhappy occcasion of the expense of so much time, I shall spend little of it now.

I have, the best I can, revolved the whole business in my thoughts; and I have said so much already that I think I shall not need to repeat anything that I have said. I think it is an Act of Government [2] that, in the aims of it, seeks the settling of the nation on a good foot, in relation to civil rights and liberties, which are the rights of the nation. And I hope I shall never be found to be one of them that go about to rob the nation of those rights — but always to serve them what I can to the

[1] Cromwell, *Letters and Speeches*, vol. iii, pp. 126–129.

[2] This refers to certain amendments to the constitution, known as *The Humble Petition and Advice*, which parliament drew up for Cromwell's approval.

attaining of them. It is also exceeding well provided there for the safety and security of honest men in that great natural and religious liberty, which is liberty of conscience. These are the great fundamentals; and I must bear my testimony to them (as I have done, and shall do still, so long as God lets me live in this world). . . .

I have only had the unhappiness, both in my conference with your committees, and in the best thoughts I could take to myself, not to be convinced of the necessity of that thing that hath been so often insisted on by you — to wit, the title of king — as in itself so necessary as it seems to be apprehended by yourselves. . . .

But truly this is my answer, that, although I think the Act of Government doth consist of very excellent parts, in all but in that one thing of the title, I should not be an honest man, if I should not tell you that I cannot accept of the government, nor undertake the trouble and charge of it — as to which I have a little more experimented than anybody else what troubles and difficulties do befall men under such trusts and in such undertakings. I say I am persuaded to return this answer to you, that I cannot undertake this government with the title of king. And that is mine answer to this great and weighty business.

131. Dissolution of the Second Parliament [1]

The second parliament of the Protectorate was dissolved by Cromwell in 1658. He announced this action in a speech of mingled sadness and irritation.

I had very comfortable expectations that God would make the meeting of this parliament a blessing; and, the Lord be my witness, I desired the carrying-on the affairs of the nation to these ends. The blessing which I mean, and which we ever climbed at, was mercy, truth, righteousness, and peace — which I desire may be improved.

That which brought me into the capacity I now stand in

[1] Cromwell, *Letters and Speeches*, vol. iii, pp. 187–192.

was the petition and advice given me by you; who, in reference to the ancient constitution did draw me to accept the place of Protector. There is not a man living who can say I sought it; no, not a man or woman treading upon English ground. . . . I can say in the presence of God, in comparison of whom we are but like poor creeping ants upon the earth, I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than have undertaken such a place of government as this is. But undertaking it by the advice and petition of you, I did look that you that had offered it unto me should make it good. . . .

God is my witness; I speak it; it is evident to all the world and people living that a new business hath been seeking in the army against this actual settlement made by your consent. . . . You have not only disjointed yourselves but the whole nation, which is in likelihood of running into more confusion in these fifteen or sixteen days that you have sat, than it hath been from the rising of the last session to this day. Through the intention of revising a Commonwealth again! That some of the people might be the men that might rule all! And they are endeavoring to engage the army to carry that thing. . . . These designs have been made among the army, to break and divide us. I speak this in the presence of some of the army: that these things have not been according to God, nor according to truth, pretend what you will! These things tend to nothing else but the playing of the king of Scots' game; and I think myself bound before God to do what I can to prevent it.

That which I told you ten days ago was true, that there were preparations of force to invade us. God is my witness, it hath been confirmed to me since, within a day, that the king of Scots hath an army at the water side, ready to be shipped to England. I have it from those who have been eyewitnesses of it. And while it is doing, there are endeavors from some who are not far from this place, to stir up the people of this town into a tumult, what if I said, into a rebellion! And I hope I shall make it appear to be no better, if God assist me.

It hath been not only your endeavor to pervert the army while you have been sitting, and to draw them to state the question about a Commonwealth; but some of you have been listing of persons, by commission of Charles Stuart, to join with any insurrection that may be made. And what is like to come upon this, the enemy being ready to invade us, but even present blood and confusion? And if this be so, I do assign it to this cause: Your not assenting to what you did invite me to by the *Petition and Advice*, as that which might be the settlement of the nation. And if this be the end of your sitting, and this be your carriage, I think it high time that an end be put to your sitting. And I do dissolve this parliament! And let God be judge between you and me!

132. Cromwell's Prayer [1]

As Cromwell lay on his death bed (1658), he was heard to utter the following prayer. It seems to have expressed the man's inmost soul.

Lord, though I am a miserable and wretched creature, I am in covenant with Thee through grace. And I may, I will, come to Thee, for Thy people. Thou hast made me, though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good, and Thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death; Lord, however Thou do dispose of me, continue and go on to do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart, and mutual love; and go on to deliver them, and with the work of reformation; and make the name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach those who look too much on Thy instruments, to depend more upon Thyself. Pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are Thy people too. And pardon the folly of this short prayer — Even for Jesus Christ's sake. And give us a good night, if it be Thy pleasure. Amen.

[1] Cromwell, *Letters and Speeches*, vol. iii, p. 217.

CHAPTER XXVII

ENGLISH LIFE AND MANNERS UNDER THE RESTORATION [1]

SAMUEL PEPYS (1633–1703), whose *Diary* is one of the most fascinating books ever written, held an important position in the navy office at London. The *Diary* covers the period 1660–1669, the first ten years of the reign of Charles II. It was written in shorthand, quite without any thought of publication, and, indeed, was only deciphered and printed more than one hundred years after Pepys's death. He jotted down in this unique journal matters of every sort: his domestic affairs, his visits, the people he met, the books he read, and all his thoughts and feelings. Pepys's connection with the British government brought him in contact with the leading men of the time and enabled him to be a spectator of many important events. Hence the *Diary*, apart from its personal interest, is a historical document of the highest significance.

133. Arrival of Charles II in England [2]

May 23, 1660. In the morning came infinity of people on board from the king to go along with him. My Lord, Mr. Crew, and others, go on shore to meet the king as he comes off from shore, where Sir R. Stayner bringing his Majesty into the boat, I hear that his Majesty did with a great deal of affection kiss my Lord upon his first meeting. The king, with the two dukes, the queen of Bohemia, Princess Royal, and prince of

[1] *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, edited by H. B. Wheatley. 10 vols. London, 1893–1899. George Bell and Sons.

[2] Pepys, *Diary*, vol. i, pp. 155–158, 161–162.

Orange, came on board, where I in their coming in kissed the king's, queen's, and princess's hands. Infinite shooting off of the guns, and that in a disorder on purpose, which was better than if it had been otherwise. All day nothing but lords and persons of honor on board, that we were exceeding full. Dined in a great deal of state, the royal company by themselves in the coach, which was a blessed sight to see. . . . We now weighed anchor, and with a fresh gale and most happy weather we set sail for England.

All the afternoon the king walked here and there, up and down (quite contrary to what I thought him to have been), very active and stirring. Upon the quarterdeck he fell into discourse of his escape from Worcester,[1] where it made me ready to weep to hear the stories that he told of his difficulties that he had passed through, as his traveling four days and three nights on foot, every step up to his knees in dirt, with nothing but a green coat and a pair of country breeches on, and a pair of country shoes that made him so sore all over his feet, that he could scarcely stir. Yet he was forced to run away from a miller and other company, that took him for a rogue. His sitting at table at one place, where the master of the house, that had not seen him in eight years, did know him, but kept it private; when at the same table there was one that had been of his own regiment at Worcester, did not know him, but made him drink the king's health and said that the king was at least four fingers higher than he. At another place he was by some servants of the house made to drink, that they might know him not to be a Roundhead, which they swore he was. In another place at his inn, the master of the house, as the king was standing with his hands upon the back of a chair by the fireside, kneeled down and kissed his hand, privately, saying that he would not ask him who he was, but bid God bless him whither he was going. Then the difficulty of getting a boat to get into France, where he was fain to plot with the master thereof to keep his design from the four men and a boy (which was all his ship's company),

[1] The battle of Worcester, won by Cromwell in 1651.

and so got to Fécamp in France. At Rouen he looked so poorly, that the people went into the rooms before he went away to see whether he had not stole something or other.

May 25, 1660. By the morning we were come close to the land, and everybody made ready to get on shore. . . . The king was received by General Monk with all imaginable love and respect at his entrance upon the land of Dover. Infinite the crowd of people and the horsemen, citizens, and noblemen of all sorts. The mayor of the town came and gave him his white staff, the badge of his place, which the king did give him again. The mayor also presented him from the town a very rich Bible, which he took and said it was the thing that he loved above all things in the world. A canopy was provided for him to stand under, which he did, and talked awhile with General Monk and others, and so into a stately coach there set for him, and so away through the town toward Canterbury, without making any stay at Dover. The shouting and joy expressed by all is past imagination.

134. Trial and Execution of the Regicides [1]

Oct. 10, 1660. At night comes Mr. Moore, and stayed late with me to tell me how Sir Hardress Waller [2] (who alone pleads guilty), Scott,[3] Cook,[4] Peters,[5] Harrison,[6] and others were this day arraigned at the bar at the Sessions House, there being upon the bench the Lord Mayor, General Monk, Lord Sandwich, and others; such a bench of noblemen as had not been ever seen in England! The accused all seem to be dismayed, and will all be condemned without question. In Sir Orlando Bridgman's charge, he did wholly rip up the unjustness of the war

[1] Pepys, *Diary*, vol. i, pp. 258–259, 260, 261, 264.

[2] One of Charles I's judges. His sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life.

[3] The regicide Secretary of State.

[4] Solicitor-General for the Commonwealth. He directed the prosecution of Charles I.

[5] Cromwell's chaplain.

[6] General Thomas Harrison signed the warrant for the execution of the king.

against the king from the beginning, and so it much reflects upon all the Long Parliament, though the king had pardoned them, yet they must hereby confess that the king do look upon them as traitors. To-morrow they are to plead what they have to say.

Oct. 13, 1660. I went out to Charing Cross, to see General Harrison hanged, drawn, and quartered; which was done there, he looking as cheerful as any man could do in that condition. He was presently cut down, and his head and heart shown to the people, at which there were great shouts of joy. It is reported that he said that he was sure to come shortly at the right hand of Christ to judge them that now had judged him; and that his wife expects his coming again. Thus it was my chance to see the king beheaded at Whitehall, and to see the first blood shed in revenge for the blood of the king at Charing Cross.

Oct. 15, 1660. This morning Mr. Carew [1] was hanged and quartered at Charing Cross; but his quarters, by a great favor, are not to be hung up.

Oct. 20, 1660. This afternoon, going through London, and calling at Crowe's the upholsterer's in St. Bartholomew's, I saw the limbs of some of our new traitors set upon Aldersgate, which was a sad sight to see; and a bloody week this and the last have been, there being ten hanged, drawn, and quartered.

135. Coronation of Charles II [2]

April 23, 1661. About four o'clock I rose and went to Westminster Abbey. . . . And with much ado, by the favor of Mr. Cooper, his man, did get up into a great scaffold across the north end of the abbey, where with a great deal of patience I sat from past four o'clock till eleven o'clock before the king came in. And a great pleasure it was to see the abbey raised in the middle, all covered with red and a throne, (that is, a chair) [3]

[1] John Carew also signed the warrant for the execution of Charles I.

[2] Pepys, *Diary*, vol. ii, pp. 19–21.

[3] The coronation chair in Westminster Abbey. Beneath the seat is the "Stone of Destiny," which Edward I carried off from Scone in Scotland in 1296.

and foot-stool on the top of it; and all the officers of all kinds, so much as the very fiddlers, in red vests. At last came in the dean and prebends of Westminster, with the bishops (many of them in cloth-of-gold copes), and after them the nobility, all in their parliament robes, which was a most magnificent sight. Then the duke and the king with a scepter (carried by my Lord Sandwich) and sword and orb before him, and the crown too. The king in his robes, bare-headed, which was very fine. And after all had placed themselves, there was a sermon and the service; and then in the choir at the high altar, the king passed through all the ceremonies of the coronation, which to my great grief I and most in the abbey could not see. The crown being put upon his head, a great shout began, and he came forth to the throne, and there passed more ceremonies: as taking the oath, and having things read to him by the bishop, and his lords (who put on their caps as soon as the king put on his crown) and bishops came and kneeled before him. And three times the Garter King of Arms went to the three open places on the scaffold, and proclaimed that, if anyone could show any reason why Charles Stuart should not be king of England, he should now come and speak. And a general pardon also was read by the Lord Chancellor, and silver medals were flung up and down by my Lord Cornwallis, but I could not obtain any. So great was the noise that I could make but little of the music; and indeed, it was lost to everybody.

136. The Great Plague in London [1]

Aug. 31, 1665. This month ends with great sadness upon the public, because of the terrible plague which rages almost everywhere in the kingdom. Every day sadder and sadder news of its increase. In the City [2] died this week 7,496, and of them 6,102 of the plague. But it is feared that the true number of the dead this week is near 10,000; partly from the poor that

[1] Pepys, *Diary*, vol. v, pp. 62, 86.

[2] The City, the London of tradition and history, occupies little more than one square mile. It is now a very small part of the metropolis.

cannot be taken notice of, through the greatness of the number, and partly from the Quakers and others that will not have any bell ring for them.

Sept. 20, 1665. What a sad time it is to see no boats upon the Thames; and grass grows all up and down Whitehall court, and nobody but poor wretches in the streets! And, what is worst of all, the duke showed us the number of those who have died from the plague this week, brought in the last night from the Lord Mayor; that it is increased about 600 more than the last, which is quite contrary to all our hopes and expectations, from the coldness of the late season. For the whole general number is 8,297, and of them the plague has caused the death of 7,165.

137. The Great Fire in London [1]

Sept. 2, 1666. Jane called us up about three in the morning, to tell us of a great fire they saw in the City. So I rose and went to her window, and thought it to be in the rear of Mark Lane at the farthest; but, being unused to such fires as followed, I thought it far enough off; and so went to bed again and to sleep. About seven rose again to dress myself, and then looked out the window, and saw the fire not so much as it was and farther off. . . . By and by Jane comes and tells me that she hears that above three hundred houses have been burned down last night by the fire we saw, and that it is now burning down all Fish Street, by London Bridge. So I made myself ready presently, and walked to the Tower, and there got up upon one of the high places . . . and there I did see the houses at that end of the bridge all on fire, and an infinite great fire at this end of the bridge. . . . So down, with my heart full of trouble, to the lieutenant of the Tower, who tells me that the fire began this morning in the king's baker's house in Pudding Lane, and that it has burned St. Magnus's Church and most of Fish Street already. So I went down to the waterside, and there got a boat and there saw a lamentable fire. . . .

[1] Pepys, *Diary*, vol. v, pp. 417–421.

Every one was endeavoring to remove his goods, flinging them into the river or bringing them into lighters that lay off. Poor people stayed in their houses until the very fire touched them and would then run into boats, or would clamber from one pair of stairs by the waterside to another. Among other things, the poor pigeons, I perceive, were loth to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconies till some of them burned their wings and fell down. Having in an hour's time seen the fire rage every way, and nobody endeavoring to quench it, but endeavoring, instead, to remove their goods and leave all to the fire, and having seen it get as far as the Steelyard, and the wind mighty high and driving it into the City; and everything, after so long a drought, proving combustible, even the very stones of churches . . . I went to Whitehall, and there up to the king's closet in the chapel, where people came about me, and I did give them an account which dismayed them all, and word was carried in to the king.

So I was called for, and did tell the king and duke of York what I saw, and that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down nothing could stop the fire. They seemed much troubled, and the king commanded me to go to the Lord Mayor from him, and command him to spare no house, but to pull down everything before the fire. The duke of York bid me tell him that if he would have any more soldiers he shall; and so did my Lord Arlington afterwards as a great secret. . . . I went to St. Paul's and there walked along Watling Street, as well as I could, every creature coming away loaded with goods to save, and here and there sick people carried away in beds. Many fine objects were carried in carts and on backs. At last met my Lord Mayor in Canning Street, like a man spent, with a handkerchief about his neck. To the king's message he cried, like a fainting woman, "Lord! what can I do? I am exhausted; people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses, but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." That he needed no more soldiers; and that, for himself, he must go and refresh himself, having been up all night. So he left me,

and I him, and walked home, seeing people all almost distracted, and no manner of means used to quench the fire. The houses, too, so very thick thereabouts, and full of matter for burning, as pitch and tar, in Thames Street, and warehouses of oil, and wines, and brandy, and other things. . . .

Having seen as much as I could now, I went away to Whitehall by appointment, and there walked to St. James's Park, and there met my wife and walked to my boat; and there upon the water again, and to the fire up and down, it still increasing, and the wind great. We got as near the fire as we could for smoke; and all over the Thames, with one's face in the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of sparks. This is very true; for houses were burned by these sparks and flakes of fire, three or four, nay, five or six houses, one from another. When we could endure no more upon the water, we went to a little ale-house on the bankside, over against the Three Cranes, and there stayed till it was almost dark, and saw the fire grow; and, as night came on, the fire appeared more and more, in corners and upon steeples, and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid, malicious, bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire. We stayed till, it being darkish, we saw the conflagration as one entire arch of fire from this to the other side of the bridge, and in a bow up the hill for an arch of above a mile long: it made me weep to see it. The churches and houses were all on fire and flaming at once; and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking of houses at their ruin. So home with a sad heart.

CHAPTER XXVIII

LOUIS XIV AND HIS COURT[1]

THE Duc de Saint-Simon (1675–1755) was the son of a duke and peer of France. As a young man he entered the army and served as an officer in more than one campaign. But he passed most of his active career as a courtier and diplomat during the last twenty years of the reign of Louis XIV, and then during the eight years of the Orléans regency. His position gave him an excellent opportunity to observe at first hand the pomps and vanities, the ceremonies, intrigues, petty tragedies, and petty comedies of what was the most splendid of European courts. Everything he saw or learned at this time he set down in his *Memoirs*. For sprightliness of style, satirical power, and ability to delineate character the work is almost unique. It occupies a very high place in French literature. Saint-Simon, in writing his reminiscences, addressed posterity rather than his own age. The work was not published until many years after his death, and it was not till 1829 that anything like a complete edition of it appeared in print. Although Saint-Simon revealed in his *Memoirs* the almost incredible pettiness, extravagance, and immorality of the court, he did not do so as a reformer or revolutionist. No man was more an aristocrat than he. His life, however, had been embittered by royal disfavor and by the success of men whom he regarded as vulgar adventurers. Saint-

[1] *The Memoirs of the Duke of Saint-Simon on the Reign of Louis XIV and the Regency*, translated by Bayle St. John. London, 1883. 3 vols. Bickers and Son.

Simon satirized them all in the secret pages of the *Memoirs* and did not spare even the "Grand Monarch" himself.

138. Louis XIV [1]

Louis XIV was made for a brilliant court. In the midst of other men his figure, his courage, his grace, his beauty, his grand bearing, even the tone of his voice and the majestic and natural charm of all his person, distinguished him till his death, and showed that if he had only been born a simple private gentleman, he would equally have excelled in fêtes, pleasures, and gallantry. . . .

But Louis XIV reigned in little things; the great he could never reach; even in the former, too, he was often governed. The superior ability of his early ministers and his early generals soon wearied him. He liked nobody to be in any way superior to him. Thus he chose his ministers, not for their knowledge, but for their ignorance; not for their capacity, but for their want of it. He liked to form them, as he said; liked to teach them even the most trifling things. It was the same with his generals. He took credit to himself for instructing them; wished it to be thought that from his cabinet he commanded and directed all his armies. Naturally fond of trifles, he unceasingly occupied himself with the most petty details of his troops, his household, his mansions; would even instruct his cooks, who received, like novices, lessons they had known by heart for years. This vanity, this unmeasured and unreasonable love of admiration, was his ruin. His ministers, his generals, his courtiers, soon perceived his weakness. They praised him with emulation and spoiled him.

He was exceedingly jealous of the attention paid him. Not only did he notice the presence of the most distinguished courtiers, but those of inferior degree also. He looked to the right and to the left, not only upon rising but upon going to bed, at his meals, in passing through his apartments, or his gardens of Versailles, where alone the courtiers were allowed to follow

[1] Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, vol. ii, pp. 357–358, 364–368.

him; he saw and noticed everybody; not one escaped him, not even those who hoped to remain unnoticed. He marked well all absentees from the court, found out the reason of their absence, and never lost an opportunity of acting toward them as the occasion might seem to justify. With some of the courtiers (the most distinguished), it was a demerit not to make the court their ordinary abode; with others it was a fault to come but rarely; for those who never or scarcely ever came it was certain disgrace. When their names were in any way mentioned, "I do not know them," the king would reply haughtily. . . .

Louis XIV took great pains to be well informed of all that passed everywhere; in the public places, in the private houses, in society and familar intercourse. His spies and tell-tales were very numerous. He had them of all kinds: many who were ignorant that their information reached him; others who knew it; others who wrote to him direct, sending their letters through channels he indicated; and all these letters were seen by him alone, and always before everything else. There were other spies who sometimes spoke to him secretly in his cabinet, entering by the back stairs. These unknown means ruined a great number of people of all classes, who never could discover the cause; often ruined them very unjustly; for the king, once prejudiced, never altered his opinion, or so rarely that nothing was more rare. He had, too, another fault, very dangerous for others and often for himself, since it deprived him of good subjects. He had an excellent memory; and if he saw a man who, twenty years before, perhaps, had in some manner offended him, he did not forget the man, though he might forget the offense. This was enough, however, to exclude the person from all favor. The entreaties of a minister, of a general, of his confessor even, could not move the king. He would not yield.

The most cruel means by which the king was informed of what was passing — for many years before anybody knew it — was that of opening letters. The promptness and dexterity

with which they were opened passes understanding. He saw extracts from all the letters in which there were passages that the chiefs of the post office, and then the minister who governed it, thought ought to go before him; entire letters, too, were sent to him, when their contents seemed to justify the sending. Thus the chiefs of the post, nay, the principal clerks, were in a position to suppose what they pleased and against whom they pleased. A word of contempt against the king or the government, a joke, a detached phrase, was enough. It is incredible how many people, justly or unjustly, were more or less ruined, always without resource, without trial, and without knowing why. The secret was impenetrable; for nothing ever cost the king less than profound silence and dissimulation. . . .

Never did man give with better grace than Louis XIV, or augmented so much, in this way, the price of his benefits. Never did man sell to better profit his words, even his smiles, nay, his looks. Never did disobliging words escape him; and, if he had to blame, to reprimand, or correct, which was very rare, it was nearly always with mildness, never with anger or severity. Never was man so naturally polite, or of a politeness so measured, so graduated, so adapted to person, time, and place. Toward women his politeness was without parallel. Never did he pass the humblest petticoat without raising his hat; even to chambermaids that he knew to be such, as often happened at Marly. For ladies he took his hat off completely, but to a greater or less extent; for titled people half off, holding it in his hand or against his ear for a moment. For the nobility he contented himself by putting his hand to his hat. He took it off for the princes of the blood, as for the ladies. If he accosted ladies, he did not cover himself until he had quitted them. All this was out of doors, for in the house he was never covered. His reverences were incomparable for their grace and manner; even his mode of half raising himself at supper for each lady who arrived at table. Though at last this fatigued him, yet he never ceased it; the ladies who were to sit down, however, took care not to enter after supper had commenced.

139. Versailles and Marly [1]

Nobody ever approached the magnificence of the king. His buildings, who could number them? At the same time, who was there who did not deplore the pride, the caprice, the bad taste seen in them? He built nothing useful or ornamental in Paris, except the Pont Royal, and that simply by necessity; so that, despite its incomparable extent, Paris is inferior to many cities of Europe. St.-Germain, a lovely spot, with a marvelous view, rich forest, terraces, gardens, and water, he abandoned for Versailles; the dullest and most ungrateful of all places, without prospect, without wood, without water, without soil; for the ground is all shifting sand or swamp, and the air is accordingly bad.

But he liked to subjugate nature by art and treasure. He built at Versailles, without any general design, the beautiful and the ugly, the vast and the mean, all jumbled together. His own apartments and those of the queen are inconvenient to the last degree, besides being dull and close. The gardens astonish by their magnificence, but cause regret by their bad taste. . . . The violence everywhere done to nature repels and wearies us despite ourselves. . . . I might never finish upon the monstrous defects of a palace so immense and so immensely costly, with its accompaniments, which are still more so.

At last, the king, tired of the cost and bustle, persuaded himself that he should like something little and solitary. He searched all around Versailles for some place to satisfy this new taste. He examined several neighborhoods, he traversed the hills near St.-Germain, and the vast plain which is at the bottom, where the Seine winds and bathes the feet of so many towns. . . . He found behind Lucienne a deep narrow valley, completely shut in, inaccessible from its swamps, and with a wretched village called Marly upon the slope of one of its hills. This closeness, without drainage or the means of having any, was the sole merit of the valley. The king was overjoyed at his discovery.

[1] Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, vol. ii, pp. 369–371.

It was a great work, that of draining this sewer of all the environs, which threw there their garbage, and of bringing soil thither! The hermitage was made. . . .

By degrees the hermitage was augmented, and the hills were pared and cut down, to give at least the semblance of a prospect. In fine, what with buildings, gardens, waters, aqueducts, statues, precious furniture, the park, the ornamental inclosed forest, Marly had become what it is to-day, though it has been stripped since the death of the king. Great trees were unceasingly brought from Compiègne or farther, three-fourths of which died and were immediately after replaced; vast spaces covered with thick wood, or obscure alleys, were suddenly transformed into immense pieces of water, on which people were rowed in gondolas; then these were transformed again into forest (I speak of what I have seen in six weeks); basins were changed a hundred times; cascades the same; and carp ponds adorned with the most exquisite painting, scarcely finished, were changed and differently arranged by the same hands. . . . I am under the mark in saying that even Versailles did not cost so much as Marly.

140. Court Life [1]

At eight o'clock the chief *valet de chambre* on duty, who alone had slept in the royal chamber, and who had dressed himself, awoke the king. The chief physician, the chief surgeon, and the nurse (as long as she lived) entered at the same time. . . . At quarter past the hour the grand chamberlain was called and all those who had what was called the *grandes entrées*. The chamberlain drew back the curtains which had been closed again, and presented the holy water from the vase, at the head of the bed. These gentlemen stayed but a moment, and that was the time to speak to the king, if anyone had anything to ask of him; in which case the rest stood aside. When, contrary to custom, nobody had aught to say, they were there but for a few moments. He who had opened the curtains and presented

[1] Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, vol. iii, pp. 21–27.

the holy water, presented also a prayer-book. Then all passed into the cabinet of the council. A very short religious service being over, the king called, and they reëntered. The same officer gave him his dressing-gown; immediately after, other privileged courtiers entered, and then everybody, in time to find the king putting on his shoes and stockings, for he did almost everything himself and with address and grace. Every other day we saw him shave himself; and he had a little short wig in which he always appeared, even in bed. . . . No toilet table was near him; he had simply a mirror held before him.

As soon as he was dressed, he prayed to God, at the side of his bed, where all the clergy knelt, the cardinals without cushions, all the laity remaining standing; and the captain of the guards came to the balustrade during the prayer, after which the king passed into his cabinet. He found there a very numerous company, for it included everybody in any office. He gave orders to each for the day; thus within less than ten minutes it was known what he meant to do; and then all this crowd left directly. . . .

All the court meantime waited for the king in the gallery, the captain of the guard being alone in the chamber, seated at the door of the cabinet. . . . During this pause the king gave audiences, when he wished to accord any, and gave secret interviews to foreign ministers. They were called "secret" simply to distinguish them from the uncommon ones by the bedsides.

The king went to mass, where his musicians always sang an anthem. While he was going to and returning from mass, everybody spoke to him who wished, after apprising the captain of the guard, if they were not distinguished; and he came and went by the door of the cabinets into the gallery. During mass the ministers assembled in the king's chamber, where distinguished people could go and speak or chat with them. The king amused himself a little upon returning from mass and asked almost immediately for the council. Then the morning was finished. . . .

Dinner the king ate by himself in his chamber upon a square

table in front of the middle window. It was more or less abundant, for he ordered in the morning whether it was to be "a little" or "very little" service. But even at this last, there were always many dishes, and three courses without counting the fruit. . . . Upon leaving the table the king immediately entered his cabinet. That was the the time for distinguished people to speak to him. He stayed at the door a moment to listen, then entered; very rarely did anyone follow him, never without asking him for permission to do so; and for this few had the courage. . . .

The king amused himself by feeding his dogs, and remained with them more or less time, then asked for his wardrobe, changed before the very few distinguished people it pleased the first gentleman of the chamber to admit there, and immediately went out by the backstairs into the court to get into his coach. From the bottom of that staircase to the coach, anyone who wished spoke to him. . . .

As he was but little sensitive to heat or cold, or even to rain, the weather was seldom sufficiently bad to prevent his going abroad. He went out for three objects: stag-hunting, once or more each week; shooting in his parks (and no man handled a gun with more grace or skill), once or twice a week; and walking in his gardens for exercise, and to see his workmen. Sometimes he had picnics with ladies in the forest at Marly or at Fontainebleau, and in this last place, promenades with all the court around the canal, which were a magnificent spectacle. Nobody followed him in his other promenades but those who held principal offices, except at Versailles or in the gardens of Trianon. . . .

The stag-hunting parties were on an extensive scale. At Fontainebleau every one went who wished; elsewhere only those were allowed to go who had obtained the permission once for all, and those who had obtained leave to wear the *justaucorps*, which was a blue uniform with silver and gold lace, lined with red. The king did not like too many people at these parties. He did not care for you to go if you were not fond of

the chase. He thought that ridiculous, and never bore ill-will to those who stayed away altogether.

It was the same with the gambling-table, which he liked to see always well frequented. He amused himself at Fontainebleau during bad weather by seeing good players at tennis, in which he had formerly excelled; and at Marly by seeing mall played, in which he had also been skillful. Sometimes when there was no council, he would make presents of cloths, or of silver-ware, or jewels, to the ladies, by means of a lottery, for the tickets of which they paid nothing. . . . The king took no ticket.

Upon returning home from walks or drives, anybody, as I have said, might speak to the king from the moment he left his coach till he reached the foot of his staircase. He changed his dress again and rested in his cabinet an hour or more. . . .

At ten o'clock his supper was served. The captain of the guard announced this to him. . . . This supper was always on a grand scale, the royal household at table, and a large number of courtiers and ladies present, sitting or standing. . . .

After supper the king stood some moments, his back to the balustrade of the foot of his bed, encircled by all his court; then, with bows to the ladies, passed into his cabinet, where on arriving, he gave his orders. He passed a little less than an hour there, seated in an arm-chair. . . .

The king, wishing to retire, went and fed his dogs; then said good night, passed into his chamber, where he said his prayers, as in the morning, and undressed. He said good night with an inclination of the head, and while everybody was leaving the room stood at the corner of the mantelpiece, where he gave the order to the colonel of the guards alone. Then commenced what was called the *petit coucher*, at which only specially privileged persons remained. They did not leave until he got into bed.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE ABORIGINES OF THE PACIFIC[1]

In the long roll of English seamen and explorers, the name of Captain James Cook stands among the foremost. He was born of humble parents in the year 1728, entered the royal navy as a common sailor, and rose through his own efforts to the rank of master. Cook's practical knowledge of the sea, together with the reputation which he had gained as a mathematician and astronomer, led to his selection in 1768 to command a scientific expedition to the South Pacific Ocean. This was the first of the three celebrated voyages which Cook made round the world. These voyages he himself described in as many volumes.

141. The Tahitians[2]

In August, 1768, Cook set out in the *Endeavour*, a ship of only 370 tons, and reached Tahiti eight months later (April, 1769). From Tahiti he sailed in search of the great southern continent which was supposed to exist in the Pacific. After exploring the Society Islands, Cook proceeded to New Zealand, whose coasts he circumnavigated and charted. The channel dividing the two islands of New Zealand still bears his name. He left New Zealand in March, 1770, and proceeded to "New Holland," or Australia, where he surveyed the whole east coast. After proving that Australia and New Guinea were separate islands, Cook returned by way of the Cape of Good Hope to England (June, 1771). During this memorable voyage the longest stay was made in the island of Tahiti, where Cook had excellent opportunities

[1] *The Voyages of Captain James Cook round the World.* 2 vols. London, 1853–1854. John Tallis and Company.

[2] *An Account of a Voyage round the World in 1768, 1769, 1770, and 1771,* bk. i, chs. 17–19.

for observing its inhabitants. His account of the Tahitians gave to the world for the first time a full and remarkably exact description of a Polynesian people.

As to the people, they are of the largest size of Europeans. The men are tall, strong, well-limbed, and finely shaped. The tallest that we saw was a man upon a neighboring island, called Huahine, who measured six feet, three inches and a half. The women of the superior rank are also above our middle stature, but those of the inferior class are rather below it, and some of them are very small. . . . Their complexion is that kind of clear olive, or brunette, which many people in Europe prefer to the finest white and red. . . . The shape of the face is comely, the cheekbones are not high, neither are the eyes hollow, nor the brow prominent; the only feature that does not correspond with our ideas of beauty is the nose, which is somewhat flat; but the eyes, especially those of the women, are full of expression, sometimes sparkling with fire and sometimes melting with softness; the teeth, also, are most beautifully even and white, and the breath without taint.

Their hair is black and rather coarse: the men have beards, which they wear in many fashions, always, however, plucking out a great part of them and keeping the rest perfectly clean and neat. . . . In their motions there is at once vigor and ease; their walk is graceful, their bearing easy, and their behavior to strangers and to each other affable and courteous. In their dispositions, also, they seemed to be brave, open, and candid, without either suspicion or treachery, cruelty or revenge; so that we placed the same confidence in them as in our best friends. They were, however, all thieves; and when that is admitted, they need not much fear competition with any other people upon earth. . . .

They have a custom of staining their bodies . . . which they call tattooing.[1] They prick the skin, so as just not to fetch blood, with a small instrument, something in the form of a hoe. That part of the instrument which answers to the blade is

[1] A word of Polynesian origin; Tahitian *tatu*.

made of a bone or shell, scraped very thin; the edge is cut into sharp teeth or points, from the number of three to twenty, according to its size. When tattooing is to be done, they first dip the teeth into a mixture of lampblack, formed of the smoke that rises from an oily nut which they burn instead of candles, and water. The teeth, thus prepared, are then placed upon the skin, and the handle to which they are fastened being struck by quick, smart blows, they pierce it, and at the same time carry into the puncture the black composition, which leaves an indelible stain. The operation is painful, and it is some days before the wounds are healed. Tattooing is performed upon the youth of both sexes when they are about twelve or fourteen years of age, on several parts of the body, and in various figures, according to the fancy of the parents or perhaps the rank of the party. . . .

Their dress consists of cloth or matting of different kinds. The cloth which will not bear wetting they wear in dry weather, and the matting when it rains. Their clothing is put on in many different ways, just as their fancy leads them; for in their garments nothing is cut into shape, nor are any two pieces sewed together. . . . In the heat of the day they appear almost naked, the women having only a scanty petticoat, and the men nothing but the sash that is passed between their legs and fastened round the waist. . . . Upon their legs and feet they wear no covering; but they shade their faces from the sun with little bonnets, either of matting or of coconut leaves, which they make in a few minutes. . . . Their personal ornaments, besides flowers, are few; both sexes wear earrings, but these are placed only on one side. When we came their ornaments consisted of small pieces of shell, stone, berries, red peas, or some small pearls, three in a string; but our beads very soon supplanted them all. . . .

The houses of the Tahitians are all built in the woods between the sea and the mountains. No more ground is cleared for each house than is just sufficient to prevent the dropping of the branches from rotting the thatch with which they are

covered; from the house, therefore, the inhabitant steps immediately under the shade . . . of bread-fruit trees and coconut trees. . . . Nothing can be more grateful than this shade in so warm a climate, nor anything more beautiful than these walks. As there is no underwood, the shade cools without impeding the air; and the houses, having no walls, receive the gale from whatever point it blows. . . .

The roof of a Tahitian house is thatched with palm-leaves, and the floor is covered, several inches deep, with soft hay; over this are laid mats, so that the whole is one cushion, upon which they sit in the day and sleep at night. In some houses, however, there is one stool, which is reserved for the master of the family; besides this stool, they have no furniture, except a few little blocks of wood, the upper side of which is hollowed into a curve. These wooden blocks serve them for pillows. The house is principally used as a dormitory; unless it rains, they eat in the open air, under the shade of the nearest tree. The clothes that they wear in the day provide them with covering in the night; the floor is the common bed of the whole household, and is not divided by any partition. . . .

Of the food eaten here the greater part consists of vegetables. There are no tame animals except hogs, dogs, and poultry, and these are by no means plentiful. . . . I cannot much commend the flavor of their fowls; but we all agreed that a South-Sea dog was little inferior to an English lamb. . . . The sea affords them a great variety of fish. The smaller fish, when they catch any, are generally eaten raw, as we eat oysters; and nothing that the sea produces comes amiss to them. . . . Of the many vegetables that serve them for food, the principal is the bread-fruit, to procure which costs them no trouble or labor but climbing a tree. Bread-fruit trees do not, indeed, shoot up spontaneously; but if a man plants ten of them in his lifetime, which he may do in about an hour, he will as completely fulfill his duty to his own and future generations as the natives of our less temperate climate can do by ploughing in the cold of winter and reaping in the summer's heat, as often

as these seasons return. . . . It is true that the bread-fruit is not always in season; but coconuts, bananas, plantains, and other fruits supply the deficiency. . . .

For drink, they have in general nothing but water, or the juice of the coconut; the art of producing intoxicating liquor being happily unknown among them; neither have they any narcotic which they chew, as the natives of some other countries chew opium, betel-root, and tobacco. . . .

Table they have none; but their apparatus for eating is set out with great neatness, though the articles are too simple and too few to allow anything for show. They commonly eat alone; but when a stranger happens to visit them, he sometimes makes a second in their mess. . . .

After meals, and in the heat of the day, the middle-aged people of the better sort generally sleep; they are, indeed, extremely indolent; and sleeping and eating is almost all that they do. Those that are older are less drowsy, and the boys and girls are kept awake by the natural activity and sprightliness of their age.

Their amusements include music, dancing, wrestling, and shooting with the bow; they also sometimes vie with each other in throwing a lance. . . . Their only musical instruments are flutes and drums. The flute is made of a hollow bamboo about a foot long, . . . the drum consists of a hollow block of wood, of cylindrical form, solid at one end and covered at the other with shark's skin. They beat the drum, not with sticks, but with their hands. . . .

To these instruments they sing . . . couplets when they are alone or with their families, especially after it is dark; for though they need no fires, they are not without the comfort of artificial light between sunset and bedtime. Their candles are made of the kernels of a kind of oily nut, which they stick one over another upon a skewer that is thrust through the middle of them. After the upper one is lighted, it burns down to the second, at the same time consuming that part of the skewer which goes through it; the second taking fire, burns in the same

manner down to the third, and so of the rest. Some of these candles will burn a considerable time and give a very tolerable light. They do not often sit up above an hour after it is dark. . . .

I must not conclude my account of the domestic life of these people without mentioning their personal cleanliness. . . . The natives of Tahiti, both men and women, constantly wash their whole bodies in running water three times every day; once as soon as they rise in the morning, once at noon, and again before they sleep at night, whether the sea or river is near them or at a distance. They wash not only the mouth but the hands at their meals, almost between every morsel; and their clothes, as well as their persons, are kept without spot or stain. . . .

There are many instances both of ingenuity and labor among these people, which, considering the want of metal for tools, do them great credit. Their principal manufacture is their cloth. . . . This is of three kinds, and is made of the bark of three different trees, the Chinese paper mulberry, the bread-fruit tree, and the tree which resembles the wild fig tree of the West Indies. . . . They are also very dexterous in making basket and wicker work; their baskets are of a thousand different patterns, many of them exceedingly neat; and the making them is an art that every one practices, both men and women.

They build and carve their boats with great skill. Perhaps to fabricate one of their principal vessels with their implements is as great a work as to build a British man-of-war with our iron tools. They have an adze of stone; a chisel or gouge of bone, generally that of a man's arm between the wrist and elbow; a rasp of coral; and the skin of a sting-ray, with coral sand as a file or polisher. This is a complete catalogue of their tools; and with these they build houses, construct canoes, hew stone, and fell, cleave, carve, and polish timber. . . .

Their greatest exploit, to which these tools are less equal than to any other, is felling a tree: this requires many hands and the constant labor of several days. When the tree is down, they split it with the grain into planks from three to four inches thick, the whole length and breadth of the tree. . . . They

smooth a plank very expeditiously and dexterously with their adzes, and can take off a thin coat from a whole plank without missing a stroke. As they have not the art of warping a plank, every part of the canoe, whether hollow or flat, is shaped by hand. . . .

As connected with the navigation of these people, I shall mention their wonderful sagacity in foretelling the weather, at least the quarter from which the wind will blow at a future time. . . . In their longer voyages they steer by the sun during the day, and at night by the stars. The latter the Tahitians distinguish by names and know in what part of the heavens they will appear in any of the months during which they are visible in the horizon. The natives also know the time of their annual appearing and disappearing with more precision than will easily be believed by a European astronomer.

We were not able to acquire a perfect idea of the Tahitian method of dividing time; but observed that, in speaking of it, they never used any term but *malama*, which signifies moon. Of these moons they count thirteen, and then begin again; which is a demonstration that they have a notion of the solar year; but how they compute their months so that thirteen of them shall be commensurate with the year, we could not discover. . . . Every day is subdivided into twelve parts, each of two hours, of which six belong to the day and six to the night. At these divisions they guess pretty nearly by the height of the sun while it is above the horizon; but there are a few persons who can guess at them, when the sun is below the horizon, by the stars.

In numeration they proceed from one to ten, the number of fingers on both hands; and though they have for each number a different name, they generally take hold of their fingers one by one, shifting from one hand to the other till they come to the number they want to express. And in other instances we observed that, when they were conversing with each other, they joined signs to their words, which were so expressive that a stranger might easily learn their meaning. . . . In measuring

distance they are much more deficient than in computing numbers, having but one term, which answers to fathom. When they speak of distances from place to place, they express it, like the Asiatics, by the time that is required to pass it. . . .

142. The Natives of the Marquesas Islands [1]

Cook, by his first voyage, had shown that neither Australia nor New Guinea belonged to the supposed Antarctic continent. His second voyage was undertaken for the purpose of settling, once for all, the question as to the existence of such a region. He sailed with the *Resolution* and the *Adventure* in July, 1772, touched at the Cape of Good Hope, and from there started on a zigzag journey in southern waters. Although his small ships ran the risk of destruction from floating ice, Cook did not relinquish his search until he had proved that Antarctica was only a geographical myth. He spent the remainder of this voyage in rediscovering various Pacific archipelagoes which preceding Spanish, Dutch, and English navigators had visited, but had never accurately surveyed. Among these island groups were the Marquesas, the Tonga or Friendly Isles, the New Hebrides, and New Caledonia. Later on Cook made another examination of the Pacific from New Zealand to Cape Horn, without coming upon any extensive land. In July, 1775, he returned to England. He had covered more than sixty thousand miles during an absence of just three years. This second voyage left the main outlines of the southern portions of the globe substantially as they are known to-day.

The trees, plants, and other productions of these isles, so far as we know, are nearly the same as at Tahiti and the Society Islands. The refreshments to be had include hogs, fowls, plantains, yams, and some other roots; likewise bread-fruit and coconut, but of these not many. At first these articles were purchased with nails. Beads, looking-glasses, and such trifles, which are so highly valued at the Society Islands, are in no esteem here; and even nails at last lost their value for other articles far less useful. The inhabitants of these islands, for handsome shape and regular features, perhaps surpass all other peoples. Nevertheless, the affinity of their language

[1] *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World . . . in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, bk. ii, ch. 10.

to that spoken in Tahiti and the Society Islands shows that they are of the same race. . . .

The men are curiously tattooed from head to foot. The figures are various, and seem to be directed more by fancy than custom. This tattooing makes them look dark; but the women, who are but little punctured, and youths and young children, who are not at all punctured, are as fair as some Europeans. The men are in general tall; that is, about five feet, ten inches, or six feet; but I saw none who were fat and lusty; nor did I see any who could be called meager. Their teeth are not so good, nor are their eyes so full and lively, as those of many other peoples. Their hair, like ours, is of many colors, except red, of which I saw none. Some wear it long; but the most common custom is to wear it short, except a bunch on each side of the crown, which they tie in a knot. They observe different modes in trimming the beard. Some part it, and tie it in two bunches under the chin; others plait it; some wear it loose, and others quite short.

The clothing is the same as at Tahiti, and made of the same materials; but they do not have it in such plenty, nor is it so good. The men, for the most part, have nothing to cover their nakedness, except . . . a slip of cloth passed round the waist and between the legs. This simple dress is quite sufficient for the climate. The dress of the women is a piece of cloth, wrapped round the waist like a petticoat, and a loose mantle over the shoulders. Their principal head dress, and what appears to be their chief ornament, is a sort of broad fillet, curiously made of the fibers of the husk of coconuts. . . . Their ordinary ornaments are necklaces and amulets made of shells. I did not see any with earrings, and yet all of the natives had their ears pierced.

Their dwellings are in the valleys and on the sides of the hills near their plantations. They are built after the same manner as at Tahiti; but are much meaner, and covered only with the leaves of the bread-fruit tree. The most of them are built on a square or oblong pavement of stone, raised some

height above the level of the ground. They likewise have such pavements near their houses, on which they sit to eat and amuse themselves. In the matter of eating, these people are by no means so cleanly as the Tahitians; they are likewise dirty in their cookery. Pork and fowls are cooked in an oven of hot stones as at Tahiti; but fruit and roots they roast on the fire and, after taking off the rind or skin, put them into a platter or trough with water, out of which I have seen both men and hogs eat at the same time. . . .

They seem to have dwellings or strongholds on the summits of the highest hills. These we saw only by the help of telescopes, for I did not permit any of our people to go there. We were not sufficiently acquainted with the disposition of the natives, which, however, I believe is humane and peaceful. . . .

143. The Hawaiian Islanders[1]

Less than a year after his return to England Cook received a commission from George III to undertake still another voyage. This was for the purpose of solving the old problem of the Northwest Passage.[2] Previous navigators had worked from the east through Hudson Bay; Cook was to try to find an opening on the northwest coast of America which would lead into Hudson Bay. He sailed in June, 1776, with the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*, visited Tasmania and New Zealand, and passed thence into the island world of the Pacific. Here he discovered several islands of the Hervey or Cook Archipelago (April, 1777). In February, 1778, he rediscovered the Hawaiian Islands, which a Spanish navigator had probably seen more than two centuries before, but whose existence had been forgotten. Cook then proceeded up the western coast of North America to Bering Strait and beyond, until he found the passage barred by ice. After examining both sides of the strait, he determined that the two continents of America and Asia approached each other as nearly as thirty-six miles. On the return voyage Cook again visited the Hawaiian group, which he named after his friend and patron, Lord Sandwich. Here he was slain by the natives (February, 1779). Thus closed the career of one who gave to England her title to Australia, and by his discoveries in the Pacific vastly added to geographical knowledge.

[1] *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean . . . in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779, and 1780*, bk. iii, ch. 12.

[2] See page 220.

In religious beliefs and in the manner of disposing of the dead there are many resemblances between the customs of the Hawaiians and those of other Polynesian peoples. The natives of the Tonga Islands inter their dead in a very decent manner, and they also inter their human sacrifices; but they do not offer or expose either animals or even plants to their gods, as far as we know. Those of Tahiti do not inter their dead, but expose them to waste by time and putrefaction, though the bones are afterwards buried; and, as this is the case, it is very remarkable that they should inter the entire bodies of their human sacrifices. They also offer various animals and plants to their gods. . . . The people of the Hawaiian Islands, again, inter both their common dead and human sacrifices as in the Tonga Islands; but they resemble those of Tahiti in offering animals and plants to their gods.

The taboo[1] also prevails in Hawaii to its full extent, and seemingly with much more rigor than even in the Tonga Islands. For the people here always asked, with great eagerness and signs of fear to offend, whether any particular thing which they desired to see, or we were unwilling to show, was taboo? The *maia raa*, or forbidden articles at the Society Islands, though doubtless the same thing, did not seem to be so strictly observed by them, except with respect to the dead, about whom we thought them more superstitious than any of the others were. But these are circumstances with which we are not as yet sufficiently acquainted to be decisive about; and I shall only just observe, to show the similitude in other matters connected with religion, that the priests here are as numerous as at the other islands, if we may judge from our being able, during our stay, to distinguish several saying their prayers.

But whatever resemblance we might discover in the manners of the people of Hawaii to those of Tahiti, these of course were less striking than the coincidence of language. Indeed, the languages of both places may be said to be almost word for word the same. It is true that we sometimes heard various

[1] A word of Polynesian origin; Tonga *tabu*, Samoan *tapu*, Hawaiian *kapu*.

words which were pronounced exactly as we had found at New Zealand and the Tonga Islands; but though all the four dialects are indisputably the same, the Hawaiians in general have neither the strong guttural pronunciation of the former, nor a less degree of it which also distinguishes the latter; and they have not adopted the soft mode of the Tahitians in avoiding harsh sounds. . . .

How shall we account for this people's having spread itself into so many detached islands, so widely separated from each other and in every quarter of the Pacific Ocean? We find it from New Zealand in the south, as far as the Hawaiian Islands to the north, and, in another direction, from Easter Island to the New Hebrides; that is, over an extent of sixty degrees of latitude, or twelve hundred leagues north and south, and eighty-three degrees of longitude, or sixteen hundred and sixty leagues east and west. How much farther in either direction its colonies reach is not known; but what we know already, in consequence of this and our former voyage, warrants our pronouncing it to be, though perhaps not the most numerous, certainly by far the most extensive, people upon earth. . . .

CHAPTER XXX

FRANCE ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION [1]

DURING the years 1787, 1788, and 1789 Arthur Young, an Englishman of means, leisure, and intelligence, made three extended journeys in France. Young, who was much interested in the improvement of farming methods, went to France particularly to study the agricultural situation there, but his observant eyes did not miss many aspects of the economic and political conditions prevailing at the outbreak of the Revolution. Consequently his *Travels* is a book of considerable historical interest, from the sidelights it throws on the life and manners of the French people under the Old Régime.

144. Poverty and Misery of the People [2]

Poverty and poor crops as far as Amiens; women are now ploughing with a pair of horses. The difference of the customs of the two nations is in nothing more striking than in the labors of the female sex. In England, it is very little that women will do in the fields except to glean and make hay; the first is a party of pilfering and the second of pleasure; in France, they plough and fill the dung-cart.

The same wretched country continues to La Loge; the fields are scenes of pitiable management, as the houses are of misery. Yet all this country is highly improvable, if they knew what to do with it; the property, perhaps, of some of those glittering beings who figured in the procession the other day at

[1] *Arthur Young's Travels in France*, edited by Miss Betham-Edwards. 4th edition. London, 1892. George Bell and Sons.

[2] Young, *Travels in France*, pp. 8–9, 19, 27, 123, 125, 189, 197–198.

Versailles. Heaven grant me patience when I see a country thus neglected — and forgive me the oaths I swear at the absence and ignorance of the possessors.

Pass Payrac, and meet many beggars, which we had not done before. All the country people, girls and women, are without shoes or stockings; and the ploughmen at their work have neither sabots nor feet to their stockings. This is a kind of poverty that strikes at the root of national prosperity; a large consumption among the poor being of more consequence than among the rich. The wealth of a nation lies in its circulation and consumption; and the case of poor people abstaining from the use of manufactures of leather and wool ought to be considered as an evil of the first magnitude. It reminded me of the misery of Ireland.

As far as Combourg the country has a savage aspect . . . the people almost as wild as their country, and their town of Combourg one of the most brutal, filthy places that can be seen: mud houses, no windows, and a pavement so broken as to impede all passengers, but ease none — yet here is a château, and inhabited. Who is this M. de Chateaubriand, the owner, that has nerves strong for a residence amid such filth and poverty?

To Montauban. The poor people seem poor indeed; the children terribly ragged, if possible worse clad than if with no clothes at all; as to shoes and stockings, they are luxuries. A beautiful girl of six or seven years playing with a stick, and smiling under such a bundle of rags as made my heart ache to see her; they did not beg, and when I gave them anything seemed more surprised than obliged. One-third of what I have seen of this province seems uncultivated, and nearly all of it in misery. What have kings, and ministers, and parliaments, and states to answer for their prejudices, seeing millions of hands that would be industrious are rather idle and starving, through the execrable maxims of despotism or the equally detestable prejudices of a feudal nobility.

Nangis is near enough to Paris for the people to be politi-

cians; my hair-dresser this morning tells me that everybody is determined to pay no taxes, should the National Assembly so ordain. But the soldiers, I said, will have something to say. No, Sir, never — be assured that French soldiers will never fire on the people. If they should, it is better to be shot than starved. He gave me a frightful account of the misery of the people: whole families in the utmost distress; those that work have pay insufficient to feed them, and many find it difficult to get work at all.

Walking up a long hill, to ease my horse, I was joined by a poor woman, who complained of the times and said that it was a sad country. Asking her reasons, she said her husband had but a morsel of land, one cow, and a poor little horse, yet they had forty-two pounds of wheat and three chickens to pay as a quit-rent to one noble; and one hundred and sixty-eight pounds of oats to pay to another, besides very heavy taxes. She had seven children, and the cow's milk helped to make the soup. But why, instead of a horse, do not you keep another cow? Oh, her husband could not carry his produce so well without a horse; and asses are little used in the country. It was said, at present, that something was to be done by some great folks for such poor ones, but she did not know who nor how, but God send us better times, "for the taxes and the duties crush us."

This woman, at no great distance, might have been taken for sixty or seventy years of age, her figure was so bent and her face so furrowed and hardened by labor — but she said she was only twenty-eight. An Englishman, who has not traveled, cannot imagine the figure made by the greater part of the countrywomen in France; it indicates, at the first sight, hard and severe labor. I am inclined to think that they work harder than the men, and this, united with the more miserable labor of bringing a new race of slaves into the world, destroys absolutely all symmetry of person and every feminine appearance. To what are we to attribute this difference in the manners of the lower people in the two kingdoms? To *Government.*

145. Poor Cultivation of the Land [1]

Leaving Sauve, I was much struck with a large tract of land, seemingly nothing but huge rocks; yet most of it inclosed and planted with the most industrious attention. Every man has an olive, a mulberry, an almond, or a peach tree, and vines scattered among them; so that the whole ground is covered with the oddest mixture of these plants that can be conceived. The inhabitants of this village deserve encouragement for their industry; and if I was a French minister, they should have it. They would soon turn all the deserts around them into gardens.

From Gange to the mountain of rough ground which I crossed, the ride has been the most interesting which I have taken in France; the efforts of industry the most vigorous; the animation the most lively. An activity has been here that has swept away all difficulties before it, and has clothed the very rocks with verdure. It would be a disgrace to common sense to ask the cause: the enjoyment of property must have done it. Give a man the secure possession of a bleak rock and he will turn it into a garden; give him a nine years' lease of a garden and he will convert it into a desert.

Take the road to Monein, and come presently to a scene which was so new to me in France that I could hardly believe my eyes. A succession of many well constructed, tight, and comfortable farming cottages, built of stone and covered with tiles; each having its little garden, inclosed by clipt thorn hedges, with plenty of peach and other fruit trees, some fine oaks scattered in the hedges, and young trees nursed up with so much care that nothing but the fostering attention of the owner could effect anything like it. To every house belongs a farm, perfectly well inclosed, with grass borders mown and neatly kept around the corn fields, and with gates to pass from one inclosure to another. . . . The land is all in the hands of little proprietors, without the farms being so small as to occasion a vicious and miserable population. An air of neatness, warmth,

[1] Young, *Travels in France*, pp. 53, 54, 61, 70–71, 72.

and comfort breathes over the whole. It is visible in their newly built houses and stables; in their little gardens; in their hedges; in the courts before their doors; even in the coops for their poultry and the sties for their hogs. A peasant does not think of rendering his pig comfortable, if his own happiness hangs by the thread of a nine years' lease. We are now in Béarn, within a few miles of the cradle of Henry IV.[1] Do they inherit these blessings from that good prince? The benignant genius of that good monarch seems to reign still over the country; each peasant has "the fowl in the pot."

In this thirty-seven miles of country, lying between the great rivers Garonne, Dordogne, and Charente, and consequently in one of the best parts of France for markets, the quantity of waste land is surprising: it is the predominant feature the whole way. Much of these wastes belonged to the prince de Soubise, who would not sell any part of them. Thus it is whenever you stumble on a grand seigneur, even one that was worth millions, you are sure to find his property a desert. The duke of Bouillon's and this prince's are two of the greatest properties in France; and all the signs I have yet seen of their greatness are wastes and deserts. Go to their residences, wherever they may be, and you would probably find them in the midst of a forest, very well peopled with deer, wild boars, and wolves. Oh! if I was the legislator of France for a day, I would make such great lords skip again.

Poitou, from what I see of it, is an unimproved, poor, and ugly country. It seems to want communication, demand, and activity of all kinds; nor does it, on an average, yield the half of what it might.

146. Extravagant Expenditures [2]

In this journey through Languedoc I have passed an incredible number of splendid bridges and many superb causeways. But this only proves the absurdity and oppression of govern-

[1] Henry of Navarre, king of France, 1589–1610.

[2] Young, *Travels in France*, pp. 58, 92, 132.

ment. Bridges that cost 70,000 or 80,000 pounds and immense causeways to connect towns, that have no better inns than such as I have described, appear to be gross absurdities. They cannot be made for the mere use of the inhabitants, because one-fourth of the expense would answer the purpose of real utility. They are therefore objects of public magnificence, and consequently for the eye of travelers. But what traveler, with his person surrounded by the beggarly filth of an inn, and with all his senses offended, will not condemn such inconsistencies as folly, and will not wish for more comfort and less appearance of splendor.

To the Benedictine abbey of St.-Germain, to see pillars of African marble. It is the richest abbey in France; the abbot has an income of over thirteen thousand pounds a year. I lose my patience at such revenues being thus bestowed; consistent with the spirit of the tenth century, but not with that of the eighteenth. What a noble farm would the fourth of this income establish! What turnips, what cabbages, what potatoes, what clover, what sheep, what wool! Are not these things better than a fat ecclesiastic? If an active English farmer was mounted behind this abbot, I think he would do more good to France with half the income than half the abbots of the kingdom with the whole of theirs.

Arrive at the great commercial city of Nantes. Go to the theater, newly built of fine white stone, with a magnificent portico front of eight elegant Corinthian pillars, and four others within, to part the portico from a grand vestibule. Within all is gold and painting. It is, I believe, twice as large as Drury Lane,[1] and five times as magnificent. The day was Sunday, and the theater was therefore full. *Mon Dieu!* cried I to myself, do all the wastes, the deserts, the heath, furz, broom, and bog, that I have passed for three hundred miles, lead to this spectacle? What a miracle, that all this splendor and wealth of the cities in France should be so unconnected with the country! There are no gentle transitions: at once from beggary to pro-

[1] A famous London play-house.

fusion. . . . The country is deserted, or, if a gentleman is in it, you find him in some wretched hole, to save that money which is lavished with profusion in the luxuries of a capital.

147. Defective Administration of Justice [1]

Take the road to Lourdes, where is a castle on a rock, garrisoned for the mere purpose of keeping state prisoners, sent hither by *lettres de cachet*. Seven or eight are known to be here at present; thirty have been here at a time; and many for life. They were torn by the hand of jealous tyranny from the bosom of domestic comfort; from wives, children, friends, and hurried for crimes unknown to themselves — more probably for virtues — to languish in this detested abode of misery and die of despair. Oh, liberty! liberty! — and yet this is the mildest government of any considerable country in Europe, our own excepted. The dispensations of Providence seem to have permitted the human race to exist only as the prey of tyrants, as it has made pigeons for the prey of hawks.

I was sorry to see, at the village, a pillory erected, to which a chain and heavy iron collar are fastened, as a mark of the lordly arrogance of the nobility and the slavery of the people. I asked why it was not burned, with the horror it merited? The question did not excite the surprise I expected, and which it would have done before the French Revolution.[2] This led to a conversation, by which I learned that in the High Savoy there are no seigneurs, and the people are generally at their ease; possessing little properties, and the land in spite of nature almost as valuable as in the lower country, where the people are poor and ill at their ease. I demanded why? "Because there are seigneurs everywhere." What a vice is it, and even a curse, that the gentry, instead of being the cherishers and benefactors of their poor neighbors, should thus, by the abomination of feudal rights, prove mere tyrants. Will nothing but revolutions, which cause their châteaux to be burnt, induce

[1] Young, *Travels in France*, pp. 60, 278–279.

[2] This entry in Young's journal is under date December 24, 1789.

them to give to reason and humanity what will be extorted by violence and commotion?

148. Signs of Impending Revolution [1]

Dined to-day at a party where the conversation was entirely political. . . . One opinion pervaded the whole company: that they are on the eve of some great revolution in the government; that everything points to it; the confusion in the finances great; with a deficit impossible to provide for without the Estates-General of the kingdom, yet no ideas formed of what would be the consequence of their meeting; no minister existing, or to be found in or out of power, with such decisive talents as to promise any other remedy than palliative ones; a prince on the throne, with excellent dispositions but lacking the resources of mind that could govern in such a moment without ministers; a court buried in pleasure and dissipation . . . a great ferment among all ranks of men, who are eager for some change, without knowing what to look to, or to hope for; and a strong leaven of liberty, increasing every hour since the American Revolution. All these together form a combination of circumstances that promise before long to ferment into motion, if some master-hand, of very superior talents and inflexible courage, is not found at the helm to guide events, instead of being driven by them.

It is very remarkable that such conversation never occurs, but a bankruptcy is a topic, the curious question on which is, Would a bankruptcy occasion a civil war and a total overthrow of the government? The answers that I have received to this question appear to be just: such a measure, conducted by a man of abilities, vigor, and firmness, would certainly not occasion either one or the other. But the same measure, attempted by a man of a different character, might possibly do both. All agree that the Estates-General cannot assemble without more liberty being the consequence; but I meet with so few men that have any just ideas of freedom that I question much the

[1] Young, *Travels in France*, pp. 97–98, 153–154, 214.

species of this new liberty that is to arise. They know not how to value the privileges of the people; as to the nobility and the clergy, if a revolution added anything to their scale, I think it would do more mischief than good.

The business going forward at present in the pamphlet shops of Paris is incredible. I went to the Palais Royal to see what new things were published and to procure a catalogue of all. Every hour produces something new. Thirteen came out to-day, sixteen yesterday, and ninety-two last week. We think sometimes that Debrett's or Stockdale's shops at London are crowded, but they are mere deserts, compared to Desein's and some others here, in which one can scarcely squeeze from the door to the counter. . . . This spirit of reading political tracts, they say, spreads into the provinces, so that all the presses of France are equally employed.

Nineteen-twentieths of these productions are in favor of liberty, and commonly violent against the clergy and nobility. I have to-day found many of this description; but inquiring for such as had appeared on the other side of the question, to my astonishment I discovered there are but two or three that have merit enough to be known. Is it not wonderful that, while the press teems with the most leveling and even seditious principles, which, if put in execution, would overturn the monarchy, nothing in reply appears, and that not the least step is taken by the court to restrain this extreme freedom of publication? It is easy to conceive the spirit that must thus be raised among the people.

But the coffee houses in the Palais Royal present yet more singular and astonishing spectacles; they are not only crowded within, but other expectant crowds are at the doors and windows, listening mouth open to certain orators, who from chairs or tables harangue each his little audience. The eagerness with which they are heard, and the thunder of applause they receive for every sentiment of more than common hardihood or violence against the present government, cannot easily be imagined. I am all amazement at the ministry permitting such nests and

hotbeds of sedition and revolt, which disseminate among the people, every hour, principles that by and by must be opposed with vigor, and therefore it seems little short of madness to allow their propagation at present.

The mischiefs which have been perpetrated in the country are numerous and shocking. Many châteaux have been burnt, others plundered, the seigneurs hunted down like wild beasts, their papers and titles burnt, and all their property destroyed: and these abominations not inflicted on marked persons, who were odious for their former conduct or principles, but an indiscriminating, blind rage for the love of plunder. Robbers, galley-slaves, and villains of all denominations have collected and instigated the peasants to commit all sorts of outrages. Some gentlemen informed me that similar commotions and mischiefs were being perpetrated everywhere; and that it was expected they would pervade the whole kingdom.

CHAPTER XXXI

SCENES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION[1]

Étienne Denis Pasquier, born in 1767, sprang from a family which had long been distinguished at the French bar. He was himself intended for the legal profession, and at an early age he entered the Parlement of Paris. He witnessed many of the scenes of the French Revolution, under Napoleon became a baron, and served the emperor faithfully. After Napoleon's downfall Pasquier held important offices of state under Louis XVIII, Charles X, and Louis Philippe. He retired from active life in 1848, for the purpose of compiling the reminiscences of his long and honorable career. Pasquier's views were those of a moderate reformer, who desired to renovate, but not to end, the old monarchy. He welcomed the Restoration in 1815 as "bringing back France to the form of government best suited for it." The following account of the Old Régime, with which Pasquier begins his *Memoirs*, must be read in the light of the author's conservative tendencies.

149. The Old Régime[2]

I took part in the opening of the Estates-General, and, in spite of the pomp with which the royal power was still surrounded, I there saw the passing away of the Old Régime.

The régime which preceded 1789 should, it seems to me, be considered from a twofold aspect: the one, the general condition

[1] *A History of My Time. Memoirs of the Chancellor Pasquier*, translated by C. E. Roche. New York, 1893. 3 vols. Charles Scribner's Sons.

[2] Pasquier, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 44–52.

of the country; and the other, the relations existing between the government and the country. With regard to the former, I firmly believe that, from the earliest days of the monarchy, France had at no period been happier than she was then. . . . If several wars, undertaken with little skill, and waged with still less, had compromised the honor of her arms and the reputation of her government; if they had even thrown her finances into a somewhat alarming state of disorder, it is but fair to say that the confusion resulting therefrom had merely affected the fortunes of a few creditors, and had not tapped the sources of public prosperity; on the contrary, what is styled the public administration had made constant progress. . . .

Roads had been opened connecting numerous points, and had been greatly improved in all directions. It should not be forgotten that these benefits are principally due to the reign of Louis XV. Their most important result had been a progressive improvement in the condition of agriculture.

The reign of Louis XVI had continued favoring this wise policy, which had not been interrupted by the maritime war undertaken on behalf of American independence. Many cotton-mills had sprung up, while considerable progress had been made in the manufacture of printed cotton fabrics and of steel, and in the preparing of skins. . . . Louis XVI also encouraged agriculture by every means at his command. The importation of merino sheep, that precious breed which has done so much to bring wealth to the farmer and to the manufacturer of woolens, must be placed to his credit. He had established model farms, thus placing at the disposal of agriculturists the resources of theory and facilities for their application. Large edifices were being erected in Paris, while considerable building was taking place in the villages. Foreigners flocked to the capital, where reigned a display of elegance which has never been surpassed.

What was at that time the form of government in France? It was no longer that of the ancient feudal monarchy, under which the throne, surrounded by its vassals, kept the nation at a great distance from its steps; under which the power

emanating from this throne impressed the people with a respect that verged on superstition; under which the sovereign might at times be exposed to the acts of rebellion of some of the more turbulent among these high vassals . . . but under which they ever ended with some treaty benefiting those who had shown themselves the most to be feared, the cost of such treaty coming as a matter of course out of the pockets of the nation and of the country. Richelieu, and after him, Louis XIV, had broken down these feudal potentates. The structure, of which they were the component parts, and which they helped to support, had been supplemented by a monarchy all for show, if one may employ such an expression, wherein the king alone had remained great and the cynosure of all eyes. Louis XIV, by fashioning it to his measure, had imparted to it something of his imposing air. . . .

The royal power, under the Regency, under Louis XV, and under Louis XVI, passed through many weak or incapable hands. It was, moreover, subjected to so many intrigues of the court and even of the boudoir, that, as a result, there was a considerable diminution of its prestige. . . .

The government was neither a hard nor a vexatious one. All things connected with it, which were not *de jure* tempered by the laws, were so *de facto* by the usages and customs of the day. The right of property was respected; for the immense majority of Frenchmen there was almost complete individual liberty. Still, this liberty was not inviolate, since, in spite of repeated protests from the parlement, the power of arrest, imprisonment, and exile was exercised by means of *lettres de cachet.*

It must be acknowledged that, with the exception of a few persons whose actions caused the government particular irritation, the rest of the citizens practically enjoyed the most complete liberty. One was free to speak, to write, to act with the greatest independence, and one could even defy the authorities in perfect security. Though the press was not legally free, yet anything and everything was printed and hawked about with

audacity.[1] The most sedate personages, the magistrates themselves, who ought to have curbed this licentiousness, actually encouraged it. Writings the most dangerous, and the most fatal to authority, were to be found in their possession. If, from time to time, some of the most zealous and conscientious of them denounced any flagrant case in the halls of the parlement,[2] their action was almost treated as ridiculous, and usually led to no result. Those who will not grant that this was liberty, must perforce admit that it was license.

There still remained certain pecuniary manorial rights; but they constituted a form of property as good as any other, and which could be held by a commoner as well as by one of noble birth. The power of the seigneurs over the bodies of their vassals no longer had any existence except in fiction; about all that was left to the seigneurs of the old feudal power was the shadowy obligation to protect these same vassals.

At the time of his accession, Louis XVI completely did away with anything that might still be found oppressive in the exercise of this power. Hence there was between the nobility and the other citizens, just as there was between those citizens and the clergy, but one question in dispute, that of pecuniary privileges. . . .

The influence of the clergy did not make itself felt any more heavily on the individual than did that of the nobility. The concessions just granted to Protestants, in the matter of their civil status, had met with no obstruction on the part of the ecclesiastical power. Nothing could illustrate better how tolerant it had become. The higher clergy became reconciled to the views known as the *Light of the century*. With regard to the *curés*, who came into actual contact with the people, they merely extended their paternal care of their flocks, which also absorbed the better part of their income.

Whence came then that passion for reform, that desire to

[1] Arthur Young also refers to the extreme liberty, or rather license, of the French press in pre-Revolutionary days. See page 305.

[2] The Parlement of Paris was the royal court of justice.

change everything which made itself manifest at the close of the eighteenth century? It was due rather to a great stirring up of ideas than to actual sufferings. So much had been written about these ideas, they had been so greatly discussed, that doubt had been cast upon all things. The sovereign authority had been in a more particular manner broken in upon, and the court of Louis XVI had not known how to restore the waning prestige of royal majesty, even in the matter of that exterior glamor, which oftentimes suffices to insure the obedience of the masses.

The court, sceptical and corrupt, was composed of the descendants of the most noble families of France, but also, on the other hand, of upstarts, in whose case royal favor had stood in lieu of services. The arrogance of their pretensions was in inverse ratio to their merit, and their insolent haughtiness had rendered them odious. . . .

The irreligious, critical, and philosophical spirit, the inexplicable craze for all sorts of utopian chimeras, the lowering of the moral standard, especially the loss of respect for institutions consecrated by time, and for old family traditions, all fostered the development of the passions which were soon and forever to sweep away the old French society, the Old Régime.

150. Opening of the Revolution [1]

Pasquier has a very sober account of the capture of the Bastille, July 14, 1789.

I was present at the taking of the Bastille. What has been styled the *fight* was not serious, for there was absolutely no resistance shown. Within the walls of the fortress were neither provisions nor ammunition. It was not even necessary to invest it.

The regiment of *gardes françaises*, which had led the attack, presented itself under the walls on the rue St.-Antoine side, opposite the main entrance, which was barred by a drawbridge. There was a discharge of a few musket shots, to which no reply

[1] Pasquier, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 55–56, 60–61, 85–86.

was made, and then four or five discharges from the cannon. It has been claimed that the latter broke the chains of the drawbridge. I did not notice this, and yet I was standing close to the point of attack. What I did see plainly was the action of the soldiers . . . grouped on the platform of the high tower, holding their muskets stock in air, and expressing by all means employed under similar circumstances their desire of surrendering.

The result of this so-called victory, which brought down so many favors on the heads of the so-called victors, is well-known. The truth is that this great fight did not for a moment frighten the numerous spectators who had flocked to witness its results. Among them were many women of fashion, who, in order to be closer to the scene, had left their carriages some distance away.

The scarcity of food in Paris led to much rioting. On October 5, 1789, a mob of hungry women, joined by many disorderly men, set out for Versailles to demand relief from the king himself. They passed the night in the streets of Versailles, and next morning broke into the palace and killed several of the guards. To prevent further bloodshed Louis XVI agreed to return with his wife and son to Paris. "Now we shall have bread," shouted the mob, "for we are bringing the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's little boy."

The general impression left on my mind by the horrors of the 6th of October was strengthened by the one I had felt while performing a most melancholy duty. The day following that upon which the royal family were dragged captives to the Tuileries, the parlement was, according to custom, called upon to go and present its respects to them. There were but few of the members of that body in Paris, and I was among the few of those whom the First President could bring together about his person. The traces of violence which met our eyes, the confusion existing in the palace, the cast-down and disheartened appearance of the household, the haughty and triumphant attitude of the individuals who, under the orders of Lafayette, had captured the palace guards and through whose ranks we

were compelled to wend our way, had but feebly prepared us for the heart-rending scene which awaited us as soon as we had been brought into the presence of our unfortunate sovereigns. It seemed that ten years had passed over their heads in the space of ten days.

The king's face bore the imprint of resignation. He understood that he had not reached the end of his misfortunes. Indignation shone through the queen's grief, which displayed somewhat more firmness. Her son was sitting in her lap, and, in spite of the courage of which she had given so many heroic proofs during the past forty-eight hours, one could not but feel that the son was for her a safeguard to the protection of which she committed herself. When she received us, it was plainly to be read in her eyes that she clearly saw in ours to what an extent the sorrowful congratulations which we brought were in contradiction with the feelings of our innermost hearts, and how we suffered at having to speak those meaningless sentences, consecrated by usage in days of happiness, and at not being able to speak others.

The emotion with which this scene filled me was as deep as lasting. All that in my mind and heart attracted me to and inspired me with a taste for a wise and lawfully regulated liberty faded away in the presence of the painful spectacle which aroused my indignation. Each succeeding day, indeed, witnessed the increase of disasters, spoliations, and crimes of all kinds. My sentiments were offended by the lack of respect shown to all that I had accustomed myself to hold in reverence. I was neither giddy enough to divest my mind of this spectacle, nor enough of a stoic to consider it as a necessary condition of the great destinies which awaited regenerated France.

The following brief reference is made by Pasquier to the attack on the Tuileries, August 10, 1792. This fresh revolutionary outbreak was followed by the deposition and imprisonment of the king.

Preparations were bravely and faithfully being made to resist, in case of need, an attack upon the Tuileries. The king had still at his disposal a regiment of the Swiss Guards, and a

few battalions of the National Guard, whose loyalty was undoubted. These ready means of defense were increased by a number of devoted followers, to whom free access to the château had been granted, and who had firmly resolved to make a rampart of their bodies in defense of the royal family.

Together with the Prince de St.-Maurice, I resolved upon joining this faithful band. On the morning of the 9th of August we wrote to M. de Champcenetz to ask him for cards of admission. They had not reached us by evening, and during the night between the 9th and 10th of August, we made several vain attempts to get into the château, which was then being threatened. If I make a note of this fact, it is not because of its actual importance, but because of a couple of circumstances pertaining thereto, one of which was of a fatal nature, while the other was fortunate to a singular degree. The card which I had asked for on the 9th of August reached me by the local post two days later, when all was over. How was it that it should have been so long delayed in transmission, without being intercepted? How was it, then, that it did not bring about my arrest? It was a piece of good luck which I have never been able to explain. Fate was not equally kind to the Prince de St.-Maurice. His readiness to serve the king had had no other result than mine, with the exception that his card did not reach him, and that he never discovered any trace of it. He lost his head on the scaffold, under the accusation of having been one of the defenders of the Tuileries.

Both of us witnessed the whole scene. The king passed us as he crossed the garden of the Tuileries, yielding to the advice of going to the Assembly, in order to place himself under its protection. As we left, cannon were being fired across the garden. It was a short-lived fight, but its effect was to destroy the most powerful and ancient dynasty reigning in Europe.

151. Trial and Execution of Louis XVI [1]

After a short trial before the Convention Louis XVI was condemned to death for "treason to the nation" (January 8, 1793).

Must I speak of the agonizing days which this trial made me go through? Yes, indeed; for if ever this manuscript is published, if even it is merely preserved in my family, I do not wish it to remain unknown that my father and I contributed, in so far as lay in our power, to the defense of our unfortunate king. My father . . . was in a position to render the king every assistance that lay within his power. He took part in their private deliberations, and during the course of the trial he occupied a seat in the tribune set aside for the king's defenders, taking notes with them, and aiding them in their task.

During that time I never left the public tribunes and the hallways of the House, going about in quest of information, gathering the slightest straws which showed how the wind blew, and bringing them all to my father, who would communicate them to the other gentlemen. . . . For a short while people let themselves be lulled by illusions. The streets (who would believe it?) reëchoed songs expressing pity for the fate of the king. . . . But popular sentiment was not powerful enough to have any influence within the precincts of the hall of the Convention. There it was merely the pitiless taking of votes.

In the tribune of the king's defenders the result was being reckoned up, according to what was thought to be the opinions of each member. The result of these calculations indicated an acquittal. The noble soul of M. de Malesherbes, especially, could not abandon the hope of which he so needed the support. I can still see him, the day the vote was taken, checking off the votes on his note-book as they were recorded, and passing from fear to hope, then from hope to despair. The words he spoke at the bar of the House, when the vote was finally recorded, sufficiently showed how up to the last moment it had been impossible for him to realize the perpetration of so great a deed of iniquity. . . .

[1] Pasquier, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 91–94.

The execution of the king occurred thirteen days later in the great public square of Paris, the Place de la Concorde.

It remains for me to say that I saw the tragedy which was enacted on the 21st of January. I lived in a house which faced on the boulevard, at the corner of the church of the Madeleine. My father and I sat opposite each other all morning, buried in our grief and unable to utter a word. We knew that the fatal procession was wending its way by the boulevards.

Suddenly a loud clamor made itself heard. I rushed out under the idea that perhaps an attempt was being made to rescue the king. How could I do otherwise than cherish such a hope to the very last? On reaching the goal I discovered that what I had heard was merely the howling of the raving madmen who surrounded the vehicle. I found myself sucked in by the crowd which followed it, and was dragged away by it, and, so to speak, carried and set down at the scaffold's side. So it was that I endured the horror of this awful spectacle.

Hardly had the crime been consummated when a cry of "Long live the nation!" arose from the foot of the scaffold, and, repeated from man to man, was taken up by the whole of the vast concourse of people. This cry was followed by the deepest and most gloomy silence. Shame, horror, and terror were now hovering over the entire locality. I crossed it once more, swept back by the flood which had brought me thither. Each one walked along slowly, hardly daring to look at another. The rest of the day was spent in a state of profound stupor, which spread a pall over the whole city. Twice was I compelled to leave the house, and on both occasions did I find the streets deserted and silent. The assassins had lost their accustomed spirit of bravado. Public grief made itself felt, and they were silent in the face of it.

152. The Reign of Terror [1]

In the month of March, 1793, the revolutionary tribunals were organized, together with the committees of General Police

[1] Pasquier, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 95–96, 116–120.

and of Public Safety. The *émigrés*, the aristocrats, and the enemies of the Revolution were all outlawed, and a revolutionary army was especially intrusted with hunting them down.

The law of the *suspects* spread out a huge net from which no one might hope to escape. Fresh prisons were opened in all directions, and they could scarcely hold the number of unfortunate people stowed away in them. The Convention let loose all over the country deputies chosen among the most ferocious and vicious of the Mountain's membership. France was handed over defenseless to these representatives of the people, clothed with the most unlimited powers, and disposing, at their own free will, of the liberty and life of any individual whom it pleased them to call a *counter-revolutionist.*

In every department, in every town, they found docile executors of all their acts of savagery — a score or so of wretches, all or almost all sprung from the dregs of the population, hardly able to write their names, but invested with the title of members of the Revolutionary Committee. For the purpose of having their orders carried out, they called into requisition the help of the inert mass of citizens, which knows only how to sigh and obey, and thus, during a term of eighteen months, the very man who was to be arrested the following day took part in the arrests of the foregoing one. He who was to perish during the next week often escorted to the scaffold, while shouldering a pike, the victims of the current week. Officers, soldiers, generals, officials, rich and poor, all stood alike in fear of these modern proconsuls, and all fled who had the means of flight at their disposal. But it was very hard to escape their vigilance when one belonged to the proscribed class.

Pasquier, whose father had been previously guillotined, did not escape suspicion during the Terror. In 1794 he was arrested, together with his wife, and taken to the prison of St.-Lazare. A younger brother and two brothers-in-law were already confined there.

In every one of the large prisons were a certain number of scoundrels, apparently detained as prisoners like the others, but who were really there to select and draw up a list of the

victims. Several of them had become known as spies, and, incredible as it may seem, their lives were spared by those in the midst of whom they fulfilled their shameful duty. On the contrary, the prisoners treated them gently and paid them court. I had scarcely passed the first wicket, and was following the jailer who was taking me to the room I was to occupy, when I found myself face to face with M. de Montrou, already notorious through his scandalous intrigues, and whose adventures have since created such a stir in society. He came close to me, and without pretending to notice me, whispered into my ear the following salutary bit of advice: "While here, do not speak a word to anybody whom you do not know thoroughly."

On reaching with Mme. Pasquier the lodging destined for our use, and which had been vacated by the two victims of the previous day, we were soon surrounded by our relations, and by a few friends who hastened to offer us all the assistance they could. We were enjoying, as far as one can enjoy anything when in a similar position, these proofs of kindly interest and friendship, when one of my brothers-in-law, who was looking out of the window, exclaimed, "Ah, here is Pépin Dégrouettes about to take his daily walk. We must go and show ourselves. Come along with us." "Why so?" I queried, whereupon I was told that he was the principal one among the rascals whose abominable rôle I have described. . . . Every afternoon he would thus take a turn in the yard, and it was for him the occasion of passing in review, so to speak, the flock which he was gradually sending to the slaughter-house. Woe unto him who seemed to hide, or to avoid his look! Such a one was immediately noted, and he could be sure that his turn would come next. Many a gallant man's death became a settled thing, because he was a few minutes late in coming down into the yard and passing under the fellow's notice. The surrendering oneself to his discretion was apparently a way of imploring mercy at his hands. We went through the formality, and it constituted a scene which I never can forget. I can still see him, a man

four feet, seven inches, or four feet, eight inches high, hump-backed, of twisted form, bandy-legged, and as red-headed as Judas. He was completely surrounded by prisoners, some of whom walked backwards in his presence, earnestly soliciting a look from him.

We were told a few days later that, when the last list was made up, he and his assistants had experienced a feeling of pity for my young brother whose name was on it, and that they had stricken it out. His lively, frank, and open demeanor, and the habit of seeing him for so long (he was, in spite of his youth, the oldest resident of the prison), had inspired them with a kindly feeling of which they could not divest themselves. To this must be attributed his not having shared the fate of young Mailly, who was sent to the scaffold for the offense they had committed in common, and which consisted in throwing in the face of the keeper of the prison some rotten herrings, telling him ironically that he might feast on them. . . .

We all considered ourselves doomed victims, and did not think that there remained the slightest chance of salvation, when the morning of the 9th Thermidor dawned. The day passed without the slightest echo of what was happening outside penetrating our prison walls. On the morning of the 10th, a few of us were informed by turnkeys whom we had remunerated for certain personal services, that Robespierre had been brought to the prison during the night, and that those who had him in custody sought to have him incarcerated there, but the jailor refused to receive him. This alone was a sufficient proof that a most important event was taking place, and during the course of the day we succeeded in obtaining newspapers which told us all. . . .

The *coup d'état* of the "9th Thermidor" (July 27, 1794) led to the overthrow of Robespierre. As a consequence of the reaction in favor of ordinary government, Pasquier regained his liberty and his estates.

When I left St.-Lazare, I found that the march of events had been rapid, and that their trend was more and more pronounced

in favor of order and justice. After having been violently repressed, the more enlightened and the more respectable portion of the population was about to enjoy the right of living openly. How can I describe the joy of the friends and relations come back to life from prisons, or from obscure hiding-places, who had lost all hope of meeting again, who inquired as to the fate of beloved ones, and about those whom they had lost. Their sweetest consolation was to be able to weep together over those who had fallen under the revolutionary scythe. The first use to which they put their freedom was to make a public display of their grief and of their lamentations. During the Terror, and especially during the last six months of its reign, no one dared to wear mourning for those who had perished on the scaffold. Mingled with so many heart-rending recollections was the joy felt over a deliverance which might more appropriately be styled a resurrection. . . .

None of the terrible laws made during the two past years were abrogated, but this did not trouble people. The greater part of the assassins, both leaders and hirelings, were still in possession of their lives; they mingled unpunished with their victims. Who was there to call them to account for the blood which they had shed? Contempt protected them against hatred, and so, escaping public vengeance, they vanished from sight.

153. The "18th and 19th Brumaire" [1]

The last chapter in the history of the French Revolution was written on the "18th and 19th Brumaire" (November 9–10, 1799), when Napoleon overthrew the Directory and ended the existence of the Council of Five Hundred. Only ten and a half years from the summoning of the Estates-General at Versailles, parliamentary government in France fell beneath the sword.

The men most taken into the confidence of Napoleon, and who were best informed as to his plans during the days preceding the 18th Brumaire, were, besides his brother Lucien, Messieurs Roederer, Regnaud de St.-Jean d'Angély, Cambacérès,

[1] Pasquier, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 153–156.

and Talleyrand. In addition to these, some hundred and fifty men at least were initiated into his secrets, to a higher or lesser degree. In spite of this, the Directory was taken unawares. The military guard of the Directory took sides against it, without its president (Gohier) entertaining the least suspicion of this defection. This guard, composed of an infantry regiment which had belonged to the army of Italy, and of a cavalry regiment commanded by the Corsican Sébastiani, formed the nucleus of the military forces Napoleon could dispose of, and insured the success of his enterprise.

General Lefèvre, who was in command of the Paris garrison, went over to him unreservedly. This service was never forgotten, and the recollection of it is to be found during the brilliant period when Napoleon distributed among his adherents so many of the batons of a Marshal of France. Many accessions to fortune, among those which occurred during the Consulate and the Empire, are to be explained in the same fashion, and their foundations rest upon claims to gratitude dating from the same epoch. Whether as First Consul or as Emperor, Napoleon ever showed his gratitude in this respect.

It is unnecessary to dwell to any extent on the scenes of the "18th and 19th Brumaire." They have been so often told, and no one can have forgotten Napoleon's apostrophe, on the 18th, to the partisans of the Directory, as spoken to an emissary of Barras: "What have you done with that land of France which I left to your care in so magnificent a condition? I bequeathed you peace, and on my return I find war. I left you the memory of victories, and now I have come back to face defeats. I left with you the millions I had gathered in Italy, and to-day I see nothing in every direction but laws despoiling the people, coupled with distress. What have you done with the one hundred thousand French citizens, my companions in glory, all of whom I knew? You have sent them to their death. This state of things cannot last, for it would lead us to despotism. We require liberty reposing on the basis of equality."

It is well known that on the 19th, at St.-Cloud, the firmness

of Napoleon, so frequently tested on the battlefield, was for a moment shaken by the vociferous yells with which he was greeted by the Council of Five Hundred, and in the face of which he deemed it prudent to beat a retreat. His brother, Lucien, was the president of this council, and the firmness of the parliamentarian was in this instance more enduring than that of the warrior. Lucien weathered the storm, and prevented the passing of a decree of outlawry. Napoleon soon returned, supported by a military escort commanded by Generals Murat and Leclerc. The soldiers had been electrified by a rumor that the life of Napoleon had been attempted in the chamber of the council. The appearance and the attitude of this faithful armed band quickly cut the Gordian knot. The chamber was soon evacuated, and many of the members of the Council, anxious to take the shortest road, fled by the windows.

So Napoleon remained master of the situation by means of a method bearing some resemblance to that put in use by Cromwell to rid himself of the Long Parliament. Still, the French general preserved a greater respect for appearances than his forerunner, and he took care to shelter himself behind a semblance of legality. . . .

The three provisional consuls were Sieyès and Roger-Ducos of the Directory, and Napoleon. This provisional state of government lasted only six weeks, during which the consuls and the Legislative Commission prepared and drew up a constitution. This was the fourth in ten years. It was promulgated on the 24th of December, 1799, and is known as the Constitution of the Year VIII. Its result was to establish the consular government.

A new era dawned for France with this form of government. The face of things was entirely changed, and everything began to tend to a new goal. The power of the clubs, and of deliberative assemblies, was succeeded by the most absolute authority placed in the hands of one man. Thus, with but slight shades of distinction, will the march of events ever progress henceforth, and one form of excess will ever call forth its very opposite.

CHAPTER XXXII

LETTERS AND PROCLAMATIONS OF NAPOLEON[1]

THE most important source for the life of Napoleon is his *Correspondence*. This was published in 1858–1869 by a commission appointed by Napoleon III, then emperor of the French. There are over twenty thousand letters, dispatches, and proclamations in the collection, which fills thirty-two volumes. The *Correspondence* covers the period 1793–1815; it is not complete, for some letters have been omitted, and others more or less garbled by the editors. But even in its present form the work affords an idea of the prodigious activity of Napoleon, who in twenty-two years, despite incessant campaigning and the heavy burden of administration, found time to dictate so many documents. As might be expected, these throw light upon almost every aspect of the emperor's career.

154. Napoleon's Early Years[2]

While still a child Napoleon determined to be a soldier. His father did not oppose his resolve and sent him in 1779 to the French military school of Brienne, where cadets of noble families received a free education. Napoleon was then ten years of age. He went through the ordinary curriculum with credit and showed proficiency in mathematics. We are told that he devoted much of his spare time to history, especially Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* and Cæsar's *Commentaries*. The small Corsican boy, moody, silent, and solitary, made few friends among his schoolmates. In 1781, after two years' residence at Brienne,

[1] *A Selection from the Letters and Despatches of the First Napoleon*, edited by D. A. Bingham. 3 vols. London, 1884. Chapman and Hall.

[2] Bingham, *Letters and Despatches*, vol. i, pp. 5, 27, 58.

he wrote to his father the following letter. It is the earliest specimen of his correspondence which has been preserved.

If you or my protectors do not give me the means of supporting myself more honorably in the house where I am, let me return home immediately. I am tired of exhibiting indigence and of seeing the smiles of insolent scholars who are only superior to me by reason of their fortune; for there is not one capable of feeling the noble sentiments with which I am animated. What! sir, your son is to be the laughing-stock of some popinjays, who, proud of the pleasures they give themselves, make fun of the privations I endure! No, my father, no! Should fortune absolutely refuse the amelioration of my lot, remove me from Brienne, and if necessary give me a mechancial profession. By these offers judge of my despair. This letter, believe me, is not dictated by any vain desire to indulge in expensive amusements; I am not at all fond of them. I simply experience the want of showing that I have the means of procuring them like the rest of my comrades.

Having passed his examinations in 1785, Napoleon joined a French artillery regiment and learned in practice all the duties of an officer. He took a keen interest in the reform movements which were beginning to agitate France, adopted republican sentiments, and for a time, at least, became a Jacobin. But the following letter to his elder brother, Joseph, written from Paris in 1792, indicates that he placed little confidence in the Revolutionary leaders.

The men at the head of the Revolution are a poor lot. It must be acknowledged, when one views matters closely, that the people do not deserve all the trouble taken about them. You are acquainted with the history of Ajaccio;[1] that of Paris is the same. Perhaps here men are meaner, worse, and greater liars. . . . Every one pursues his own interest and searches to gain his own ends by dint of all sorts of crimes; people intrigue as basely as ever. All this destroys ambition. One pities those who have the misfortune to play a part in public affairs. . . . To live tranquilly and enjoy the affections of one's family is what

[1] Napoleon's native town in Corsica.

one should do when one has five thousand francs a year and is between twenty-five and forty years of age; that is to say, when the imagination has calmed down and no longer torments one. I embrace you, and recommend you to be moderate in all things — in all things, mind, if you desire to live happily.

From his viewpoint in Paris, Napoleon witnessed some of the great "days" of the Revolution, including the humiliation of Louis XVI at Versailles and the September massacres. His sound common sense revolted against such scenes. "Why don't they sweep off four or five hundred of that rabble with cannon?" he exclaimed. "The rest would then run away fast enough." Two years later he proved the truth of his words. On October 5, 1795, a mob advanced to the attack of the Tuileries, where the Convention was sitting. The young artillery officer, now become a general, met them with a "whiff of grapeshot" and crushed once for all the royalist reaction. Napoleon described the scene in a brief letter to Joseph.

At last all is over. My first idea is to think of you and to send you news concerning myself.

The royalists, formed into sections, became daily more insolent. The Convention ordered that the Lepelletier section should be disarmed, and it resisted the troops. Menou, who commanded, is said to have played the traitor, and was at once dismissed. The Convention appointed Barras to command the army, and the Committees appointed me second in command. We posted the troops; the enemy marched to attack us at the Tuileries; we killed a great number of them, losing on our side thirty men killed and sixty wounded. We have disarmed the sections, and all is quiet. As usual, I was not wounded.

155. The Rise of Napoleon [1]

Napoleon's success in quelling the Parisian mob gained for him the favor of Barras, the most prominent member of the Directory, and an appointment to the command of the French army of Italy. To his soldiers Napoleon addressed from Nice in 1796 the thrilling proclamation which follows.

[1] Bingham, *Letters and Despatches*, vol. i, pp. 64, 208.

Soldiers, you were naked, ill-fed: the government owed you much and had nothing to give you. Your patience, and the courage you have exhibited in the midst of these rocks, are admirable; but they procure you no glory; no brilliancy is reflected on you. I desire to lead you into the most fertile plains in the world. Rich provinces and great cities will be in your power; you will find there, honor, glory, and wealth. Soldiers of Italy, will you be wanting in courage and constancy?

Napoleon's campaigns in Italy revealed his surpassing generalship. He soon liberated Lombardy from the yoke of Austria and compelled that country to agree to the Treaty of Campo Formio (1797), thus bringing the war to an end. England, however, still remained an enemy, and Napoleon determined to strike at her through her Oriental possessions. The conquest of Egypt, he believed, would be a deadly blow to English commerce and might become a stepping-stone to the conquest of India. "This little Europe," Napoleon remarked to his secretary, "does not supply enough glory for me. I must seek it in the East: all great fame comes from that quarter." The Directory was easily persuaded to intrust him with a strong expedition, which landed in Egypt in 1798. Before the soldiers embarked at Toulon, he issued the following proclamation.

Soldiers, you are one of the wings of the army of England. You have fought on mountain and plain and besieged forts; it remained for you to wage a maritime war.

The Roman legions, which you have sometimes imitated but not yet equaled, fought against Carthage both by sea and on the plains of Zama. Victory never abandoned them, because they were constantly brave, patient in the support of fatigue, well disciplined, and united.

Soldiers, Europe has its eyes upon you.

You have great destinies to fulfill, battles to fight, dangers to overcome. You will do more than you have yet accomplished for the prosperity of your country, for the happiness of mankind, and for your own glory.

Sailors, infantry, cavalry, artillery, be united, and remember that on the day of battle you will stand in need of each other. . . .

The French rapidly overran Egypt and organized it as a colony, but they could proceed no further with their schemes of conquest.

Nelson at the battle of the Nile (1799) destroyed Napoleon's fleet, and the Turks repulsed his attack on Syria. Obliged to give up his grandiose plans for the foundation of an Eastern Empire, Napoleon began to think of returning home, where his services were badly needed. During his absence in Egypt Austria and Russia had again declared war on France, and the Directory had shown itself to be both corrupt and incompetent. At this juncture of affairs Napoleon secretly quitted Egypt and made his escape to France. Within a month of his landing (1799), he had overthrown the Directory and had become the virtual ruler of the French, with the title of First Consul. This position he retained for the next five years.

156. Napoleon as Consul [1]

The first year of the Consulate saw the withdrawal of Russia from the coalition and the crushing of Austria by the battles of Marengo and Hohenlinden (1800). Austria now made peace, and in 1802 England also signed the Treaty of Amiens. With Europe tranquil, Napoleon at last had leisure to enter upon those far-reaching reforms in government, law, and industry which have helped to immortalize his name. An interesting sidelight on the wide range of his intellectual interests at this time is afforded by his two brief notes to the eminent mathematician and astronomer, Laplace.

I have received with gratitude, citizen, the copy of your fine work (*La Mécanique céleste* [2]) which you have just sent me. The first six months I can dispose of shall be spent in reading it. If you have nothing better to do, come and dine with me to-morrow. My respects to Madame Laplace.

In the second note to Laplace he writes:

All that I have read of your work appears to me perfectly clear. I long to be able to devote a few weeks to finish reading it, and I much regret not being able to give it the time and attention it deserves. This affords me a new opportunity for bewailing the force of circumstances which have diverted me into another career, where I find myself so far removed from the

[1] Bingham, *Letters and Despatches*, vol. i, pp. 272, 289–290, 291, 407; vol. ii, pp. 44–45, 49.

[2] *Celestial Mechanics*. This famous work, which in the history of science ranks second only to Newton's *Principia*, was published at Paris in four volumes between 1799 and 1805.

sciences. I thank you for your dedication, which I accept with pleasure, and I desire that future generations in reading your *Mécanique céleste* may remember my esteem and friendship for the author.

A private soldier, having written to Napoleon reminding him of his services, his wounds, and his devotion, received this reply from the First Consul.

I have received your letter, my gallant Léon. You are the bravest grenadier in the army, now that the gallant Benezette is dead. You received one of the hundred sabers which I distributed to the army. All the soldiers admitted that you were the model of the regiment. I greatly wish to see you. The War Minister will send you an order.

When news reached France of the death of Washington, Napoleon caused the following Order of the Day to be posted.

Washington is dead. This great man fought against tyranny. He consolidated the liberty of his country. His memory will always be dear to the French people, and especially to French soldiers, who, like American soldiers, fight for liberty and equality.

Consequently, the First Consul directs that for the next ten days all the standards and pennons of the Republic shall be veiled in crape.

How Napoleon took care to throttle the press and prevent the publication of undesirable news is illustrated by the following letter to one of his officials. It was written in 1803, when England and France were again at war.

The *Débats* has published two articles dated from Germany. I wish to know whence these articles were derived, and who paid for alarming the nation with the echo of rumors spread by England. Order the *Débats* to contradict these false reports in a suitable manner. I am not more satisfied with the politics of the *Mercure*. I wish to know if the brothers Bertin, who have been constantly in English pay, own the *Débats* and the *Mercure*. Do not conceal the fact that this is the last time

I shall make known my displeasure, and that they will next learn the disapprobation of the government by the suppression of their journals; that I know everything; that the brothers Bertin are paid by England, as is proved by the tone of their articles; that it is my intention to allow only those journals which excite the nation against England and encourage it to support the vicissitudes of war, to exist.

One of the blackest deeds in Napoleon's career was the seizure, trial, and summary execution of a young Bourbon prince, the Duc d'Enghien, on a trumped-up charge of participating in a plot against the First Consul's life. The crime excited universal reprobation, even in France, but Napoleon, writing in 1804 to Joseph, frankly avowed his responsibility for it.

I cannot repent of my decision with regard to the Duc d'Enghien. This was the only means I had of leaving no doubt as to my real intentions and of annihilating the hopes of the partisans of the Bourbons. Then I cannot conceal the fact that I shall never be tranquil on the throne as long as a single Bourbon exists, and this Bourbon is one the less. . . . He was young, brilliant, brave, and consequently my most redoubtable enemy. It was the sacrifice the most necessary to my safety and grandeur. . . . Not only if what I have done were still to be done, I would do it again, but if I had a favorable opportunity to-morrow of getting rid of the last two scions of that family, I would not allow it to escape.

157. Napoleon as Emperor [1]

In 1805, the year following Napoleon's coronation as emperor of the French, Austria and Russia joined England in a third coalition against France. Napoleon's answer was the capture of a great Austrian army at Ulm and the brilliant victory at Austerlitz, which dazzled the world. He describes the battle briefly in a note to Joseph.

. . . After maneuvering for a few days I fought a decisive battle yesterday. I defeated the combined armies commanded by the emperors of Russia and Germany. Their force con-

[1] Bingham, *Letters and Despatches*, vol. ii, pp. 181–182, 249, 364–365; vol. iii, pp. 15, 31.

sisted of 80,000 Russians and 30,000 Austrians. I have made about 40,000 prisoners, taken 40 flags, 100 guns, and all the standards of the Russian Imperial Guard. . . . Although I have bivouacked in the open air for a week, my health is good. This evening I am in bed in the beautiful castle of M. de Kaunitz, and have changed my shirt for the first time in eight days. . . . The emperor of Germany sent Prince Lichtenstein to me this morning to ask for an interview. My army on the field of battle was less numerous than the enemy, who was caught while executing maneuvers.

Napoleon's policy of terrorism over the small German states is well brought out in an order which he addressed to Talleyrand.

All the libels spread through Germany come from Nuremberg. Tell the senate of that town that if the booksellers are not arrested and the libels burned, I shall punish the town before leaving Germany.

At the same time he wrote to Marshal Berthier, saying,

I suppose that you have arrested the booksellers of Augsburg and Nuremberg. Let them be brought before a court-martial and shot within twenty-four hours. It is no ordinary crime to spread libels in places occupied by the French armies, in order to excite the inhabitants against them. . . .

After Austria, Prussia had next to feel Napoleon's heavy hand. The two victories of Jena and Auerstädt beat Prussia to her knees (1806). Then came the campaigns against Russia and the battles of Eylau and Friedland. The Peace of Tilsit (1807) left Napoleon supreme in central and western Europe. But England remained unconquered. In a remarkable letter to the Tsar, written early in 1808, Napoleon endeavored to secure the aid of Russia for an attack upon the English possessions in the East. He made some tempting offers, which, had they been accepted by the Russian emperor, might have changed the map of Europe and the course of European history.

. . . You have seen the debates in the English parliament, and the decision to carry on the war. I have written to Caulaincourt on this subject, and if your Majesty will condescend to speak with him he will acquaint you with my opinion. It

is only by large and vast measures that we shall be able to arrive at peace and consolidate our system. Let your Majesty augment and fortify your army. I will give you all the help I can; no feeling of jealousy animates me against Russia: I desire her glory, prosperity and extension. Will your Majesty allow a person tenderly and truly devoted to you to give you a bit of advice? Your Majesty should drive the Swedes to a greater distance from your capital. Extend your frontiers on this side as much as you like.

An army of 50,000 men — Russians, French, and perhaps Austrians — marching upon Asia by way of Constantinople, would have no sooner reached the Euphrates than England would tremble and go down upon her knees. I am ready in Dalmatia; your Majesty is ready on the Danube. A month after coming to terms an army could be on the Bosporus. The blow would reëcho through India, and England would be subdued. I shall refuse none of the preliminary stipulations necessary to attain so great an end. But the reciprocal interest of our two countries should be combined and balanced. This can only be settled in an interview with your Majesty, or after sincere conferences between Romanzoff and Caulaincourt, and the dispatch here of a man favorable to the system. . . .

Everything can be signed and decided before the 15th of March. On the 1st of May our troops can be in Asia, and at the same time the troops of your majesty at Stockholm. Then the English, threatened in India, driven from the Levant, will be crushed under the weight of events with which the atmosphere is laden. Your Majesty and myself would have preferred the pleasures of peace and to pass our lives in the midst of our vast empires, engaged in vivifying them and rendering them happy by means of arts and a beneficent administration. The enemies of the world object to this. We must become greater in spite of ourselves. It is both wise and politic to do what destiny orders and to go where the irresistible march of events leads us. Then this cloud of pygmies will yield and will follow the movement which your Majesty and I shall

order, and the Russian people will be content with the glory, the wealth, and the fortune which will be the result of these great events. . . .

Shortly before Napoleon's departure from Paris to assume command of the army of Italy, he had married Joséphine de Beauharnais, a dashing Creole widow, to whom he seems to have been sincerely attached. But Joséphine brought him no children; and the emperor, who wished to found a Napoleonic dynasty, decided to put her away and marry again. The divorce took place in December, 1809; in January, 1810 Napoleon wrote to her in a pathetic strain as follows:

D'Audenarde, whom I sent to you this morning, tells me that you have no courage since you went to Malmaison.[1] That place, however, must bring back feelings which cannot and never ought to change, at least on my side. I long to see you, but I must know that you are strong and not weak; I am a little so, and this afflicts me terribly.

Adieu, Joséphine! good night. Should you doubt me you will be very ungrateful.

Napoleon's choice for a second wife fell on the Archduchess Marie Louise, a daughter of the Austrian emperor. In March, 1810, a few days before the marriage was to be celebrated, Napoleon sent this letter to his imperial father-in-law.

Your Majesty's daughter arrived here two days ago. She fulfills all my hopes, and for two days I have not ceased to give her and to receive from her proofs of the tender feeling which unites us. We agree together perfectly. I shall make her happy, and I shall owe your Majesty my happiness. Allow me to thank you for the splendid present which you have made me, and let your paternal heart rejoice in the assurance of the happiness of your darling child. . . .

158. Decline and Fall of Napoleon[2]

The turning-point in Napoleon's fortunes came with the disastrous invasion of Russia (1812–1813). To his immense host, on the road to

[1] A palace near Paris, which Napoleon assigned to Joséphine as her residence.

[2] Bingham, *Letters and Despatches*, vol. iii, pp. 160–161, 191, 293–294, 338–339, 347, 370–371, 410–411, 414.

Moscow, he addressed a stirring proclamation, the sentiments of which contrast strangely with those which he had expressed to the Tsar a few years before.

The second war of Poland has commenced; the first was terminated at Friedland and Tilsit. At Tilsit Russia swore an eternal alliance with France and war with England. To-day she violates her oaths. She refuses any explanation of her strange conduct until the French eagles have repassed the Rhine, thus leaving our allies at her discretion. Russia is carried away by fatality; her destinies must be accomplished. Does she believe that we have degenerated? That we are no longer the soldiers of Austerlitz? She places us between dishonor and war; the choice cannot be doubtful. Then let us march forward; let us pass the Niemen, and let us carry the war into her territory. The second Polish war will be as glorious for the French arms as the first. But the peace which we shall conclude shall put an end to the baneful influence exercised by Russia upon the affairs of Europe during the last fifty years.

The horrors of the retreat from Moscow could not be concealed. Even the emperor, in a letter to his Minister of Foreign Affairs, was obliged to disclose the real situation.

We are terribly fatigued and half starved. Send bread, meat, and brandy to meet us. I have one hundred thousand stragglers who are trying to live, and who are no longer under the colors. This causes us to run horrible dangers. My Old Guard alone maintains its ranks, but hunger is gaining in it. My heavy baggage started last night for Vilna. Hold yourself in readiness to come and meet me. . . . Speak with confidence, and do not let anything happen. Ten days' repose and provisions in abundance will reëstablish discipline. . . .

After the collapse of the Russian expedition Prussia, Austria, Sweden, and England formed another coalition against Napoleon. The decisive battle at Leipzig (1813) compelled him to retreat from Germany into France. Even at this critical stage of affairs the allies would have made a lasting peace with Napoleon, had he been ready to give

up his claims to the overlordship of Europe. Napoleon's attitude toward their proposals is set forth in a letter (January, 1814) to his trusted minister, Caulaincourt.

I consider it doubtful if the allies are acting in good faith, and if England desires peace. For myself I desire only a solid and honorable peace. France without her natural limits, without Ostend and Antwerp, would not be on an equal footing with the other states of Europe. England and all the powers recognized these limits at Frankfort.[1] The conquests of France within the Rhine and the Alps cannot be considered as a compensation for what Austria, Russia, and Prussia have acquired in Poland and Finland, and England in Asia. The policy of England and the hatred of the emperor of Russia will carry the day with Austria. I have accepted the basis of Frankfort, but it is probable that the allies have other ideas. Their propositions have been merely a mask. . . .

It is not certain that you will be received at headquarters; the Russians and the English wish to prevent all conciliation and explanation with the emperor of Austria. You must try and fathom the views of the allies, and you must let me know day by day what you learn, so that I may be in a position to furnish you with instructions. Do they wish to reduce France to her ancient limits? This would be to degrade her. They are mistaken if they think the misfortunes of war can make the nation desire such a peace. . . . Italy is intact, the Viceroy has a fine army. Before a week I shall have assembled a sufficient force to fight several battles, even before the arrival of my troops from Spain. The depredations of the Cossacks will arm the inhabitants and will double our forces. If the nation supports me, the enemy will march to their destruction. Should fortune betray me, my mind is made up; I do not care for the throne. I shall not disgrace the nation or myself by accepting shameful conditions. You must find out what

[1] The Tsar and the king of Prussia had made a declaration that the allies would leave to Napoleon the "natural boundaries" of France — the Rhine, Alps, Pyrenees, and Atlantic Ocean. Napoleon's assent to these terms came too late.

Metternich wishes. It is not in the interests of Austria to push matters to extremes. . . .

Napoleon's campaigns during the early months of 1814 against the overwhelming forces of the coalition are justly celebrated. In spite of his brilliant victories, the allies pushed nearer and nearer to Paris. On March 16, Napoleon, now almost at the end of his resources, wrote as follows to Joseph.

In conformity with the verbal instructions which I gave you, and with the spirit of my letters, you must, under no circumstances, allow the empress and the king of Rome[1] to fall into the hands of the enemy. I am going to maneuver in such a way that you will possibly have no news of me for several days. If the enemy advance upon Paris in such strength that resistance is impossible, send away the Regent, my son, the high dignitaries, the ministers, the officers of the Senate, the presidents of the Council of State, the grand officers of the crown, the Baron de la Bouillerie, and the treasure. Do not abandon my son, and remember that I would sooner have him in the Seine than in the hands of the enemies of France. The fate of Astyanax,[2] prisoner among the Greeks, has always appeared to me as the most unfortunate in history.

On March 31, Paris surrendered to the allies. Twelve days later Napoleon signed at the palace of Fontainebleau an act of abdication.

The allied Powers having proclaimed that the emperor Napoleon Bonaparte is the only obstacle to the reëstablishment of peace in Europe, the emperor, faithful to his oath, declares that he renounces, for himself and his heirs, the thrones of France and Italy, and that there is no personal sacrifice, even that of his life, which he is not ready to make in the interest of France.

After Napoleon's escape from Elba he addressed the following circular letter to the sovereigns of Europe.

You will have learned of my return to France, my entry into Paris, and the departure of the Bourbons. The true nature

[1] Napoleon's son by Marie Louise.

[2] Astyanax, Hector's son, was captured by the Greeks after the fall of Troy.

of these events must now be known to your majesties. They are the work of an irresistible force, the work of the unanimous will of a great nation which understands its duties and its rights. The dynasty which was forced on the French nation was not suited to it. The Bourbons would associate themselves neither with its feelings nor its customs. France was obliged to separate herself from them. She demanded a liberator. . . . I returned, and from the spot where I landed the love of my people bore me to the bosom of my capital. The first desire of my heart is to repay so much affection by maintaining an honorable tranquillity. The reëstablishment of the imperial throne was necessary for the happiness of Frenchmen. My fondest hope is to render it at the same time useful in consolidating the repose of Europe. . . . After having exhibited to the world the spectacle of great battles, it will be more satisfactory henceforth to indulge in nothing but peaceful rivalry, in no other strife but that sacred strife waged for the welfare of the people. . . .

After the battle of Waterloo Napoleon made this declaration to the French nation.

In declaring war in defense of the national independence, I reckoned upon the united efforts and the good will of every one, and upon the aid of all the national authorities. I had reasons to hope for success, and I consequently braved all the declarations of the Powers against me.

Circumstances appear to be changed.

I offer myself as a sacrifice to the hatred of the enemies of France. May they be sincere in their declarations that they have borne enmity to my person alone.

My political career is terminated, and I proclaim my son, under the title of Napoleon II, emperor of the French.

The present ministers will form a provisional government. The interest which I bear my son prompts me to invite the Chambers to organize the Regency without delay.

Having once more abdicated the French throne, nothing remained for Napoleon but to make his escape from France. He hoped to reach

the United States, but British warships barred the way. At length he gave himself up to the commander of the *Bellerophon*, at the same time sending the following appeal to the Prince Regent of England.

Exposed to the factions which divide my country and to the enmity of the Powers of Europe, I have terminated my political career, and I come, like Themistocles,[1] to seat myself at the hearth of the British people. I place myself beneath the protection of their laws, which protection I claim from your Royal Highness as the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies.

159. Napoleon's Will [2]

Napoleon's will, executed shortly before his death at St. Helena in 1821, is a document of much interest. Some characteristic passages follow.

"I die in the Roman religion, in the bosom of which I was born more than fifty years ago.

"I desire that my ashes may repose on the banks of the Seine, in the midst of the French people I loved so well.

"I have always had reason to be pleased with my dearest wife, Marie Louise. I preserve the most tender affection for her to the last moment. I implore her to watch over my son in order to preserve him from the snares which may surround his infancy.

"I recommend my son never to forget that he was born a French prince, and never to allow himself to become an instrument in the hands of the triumvirs who oppress the nations of Europe; he must never fight against France or do her any harm. He should adopt my motto, *Everything for the French people!*

"I die prematurely, assassinated by the English oligarchy. The English nation will not be slow in avenging me.

[1] Themistocles, the Athenian statesman, having been exiled from Athens, took refuge at the court of Persia. Here he was received kindly by the son of Xerxes.

[2] Bingham, *Letters and Despatches*, iii, 426–427.

"The unfortunate result of the two invasions of France, when she had still so many resources left, is to be attributed to the treason of Marmont, Augereau, Talleyrand, and Lafayette.

"I forgive them, and may French posterity also pardon them. . . ."

CHAPTER XXXIII

NAPOLEON [1]

THE Austrian diplomat, Prince Metternich, at his death in 1859, left a mass of letters, documents, and personal recollections of his career. In the complete edition, prepared for publication by his son, they extend to eight volumes. No part of the work is of greater interest than that which presents his opinions of Napoleon. With the French emperor Metternich was thrown in intimate contact after 1806, when he took up his residence in Paris as ambassador. "I have seen and studied Napoleon," writes Metternich, "in the moments of his greatest success; I have seen and followed him in those of his decline; and though he may have attempted to induce me to form wrong conclusions about him — as it was often his interest to do — he never succeeded. I may then flatter myself with having seized the essential traits of his character, and with having formed an impartial judgment with respect to it, while the great majority of his contemporaries have seen, as it were through a prism, only the brilliant sides and the defective or evil sides of a man whom the force of circumstances and great personal qualities raised to a height of power unexampled in modern history."

160. Mental Characteristics [2]

In my relations with Napoleon, relations which from the beginning I endeavored to make frequent and confidential,

[1] *Memoirs of Prince Metternich, 1773–1815*, translated by Mrs. Alexander Napier. 2 vols. New York, 1880. Charles Scribner's Sons.

[2] Metternich, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 271–275.

what at first struck me most was the remarkable perspicuity and grand simplicity of his mind and its processes. Conversation with him always had a charm for me, difficult to define. Seizing the essential point of subjects, stripping them of useless accessories, developing his thought and never ceasing to elaborate it till he had made it perfectly clear and conclusive, always finding the fitting word for the thing, or inventing one where the usage of the language had not created it, his conversation was ever full of interest. He did not converse, he talked; by the wealth of his ideas and the facility of his elocution, he was able to lead the conversation, and one of his habitual expressions was, "I see what you want; you wish to come to such or such a point; well, let us go straight to it."

Yet he did not fail to listen to the remarks and objections which were addressed to him; he accepted them, questioned them, or opposed them, without losing the tone or overstepping the bounds of a business discussion, and I have never felt the least difficulty in saying to him what I believed to be the truth, even when it was not likely to please him. . . .

He had little scientific knowledge, although his partisans encouraged the belief that he was a profound mathematician. His knowledge of mathematical science would not have raised him above the level of any officer destined, as he was himself, for the artillery; but his natural abilities supplied the want of knowledge. He became a legislator and administrator, as he became a great soldier, by following his own instinct. The turn of his mind always led him toward the positive; he disliked vague ideas, and hated equally the dreams of visionaries and the abstraction of idealists, and treated as mere nonsense everything that was not clearly and practically presented to him. He valued only those sciences which can be controlled and verified by the senses or which rest on observation and experience. He had the greatest contempt for the false philosophy and the false philanthropy of the eighteenth century. Among the chief teachers of these doctrines, Voltaire was the special object of his aversion, and he even went so far as to

attack, whenever he had the opportunity, the general opinion as to Voltaire's literary power.

Napoleon was not irreligious in the ordinary sense of the word. . . . A Christian and a Catholic, he recognized in religion alone the right to govern human societies. He looked on Christianity as the basis of all real civilization; and considered Catholicism as the form of worship most favorable to the maintenance of order and the true tranquillity of the moral world; Protestantism as a source of trouble and disagreements. Personally indifferent to religious practices, he respected them too much to permit the slightest ridicule of those who followed them. . . .

He was gifted with a particular tact for recognizing those men who could be useful to him. He discovered in them very quickly the side by which he could best attach them to his interest. . . . He had, above all, studied the national character of the French, and the history of his life proved that he had understood it rightly. He privately regarded the Parisians as children, and often compared Paris to the opera. Having reproached him one day with the palpable falsehoods which formed the chief part of his bulletins, he said to me with a smile, "They are not written for you; the Parisians believe everything, and I might tell them a great deal more which they would not refuse to accept."

161. Political Ideas [1]

It frequently happened that he turned his conversation into historical discussions. These discussions generally revealed his imperfect knowledge of facts, but an extreme sagacity in appreciating causes and foreseeing consequences. He guessed more than he knew, and, while lending to persons and events the color of his own mind, he explained them in an ingenious manner. As he always made use of the same quotations, he must have drawn from a very few books, and those principally abridgments, the most salient points of ancient history and

[1] Metternich, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 275–277.

the history of France. He, however, charged his memory with a collection of names and facts sufficiently copious to impose on those whose studies had been still less thorough than his own. His heroes were Alexander, Cæsar, and, above all, Charlemagne. He was singularly occupied with his claim to be the successor of Charlemagne by right and title. He would lose himself in interminable discussions with me in endeavoring to sustain this paradox by the feeblest reasoning. . . .

One thing which he always regretted extremely was, that he could not invoke the principle of Legitimacy as the basis of his power. Few men have been so profoundly conscious as he was that authority deprived of this foundation is precarious, fragile, and open to attack. He never lost an opportunity of anxiously protesting against those who imagined that he occupied the throne as a usurper. "The throne of France," he said to me once, "was vacant. Louis XVI had not been able to maintain himself. If I had been in his place, the Revolution — notwithstanding the immense progress it had made in men's minds during the preceding reign — would never have been consummated. The king overthrown, the Republic was master of the soil of France. It is that which I have replaced. The old throne of France is buried under its rubbish; I had to found a new one. The Bourbons could not reign over this creation. My strength lies in my fortune: I am new, like the Empire; there is, therefore, a perfect homogeneity between the Empire and myself." . . .

He was also much impressed with the idea of the divine origin of supreme authority. He said to me one day, shortly after his marriage with the archduchess, "I see that the empress, in writing to her father, addresses her letter to *His Sacred and Imperial Majesty*. Is this title customary with you?" I told him that it was, from the tradition of the old German Empire, which bore the title of the Holy Empire, and because it was also attached to the Apostolic crown of Hungary. Napoleon then replied, in a grave tone, "It is a fine custom, and a good expression. Power comes from God, and it is that alone which

places it beyond the attacks of men. Hence I shall adopt the title some day." . . .

162. Personality [1]

Napoleon looked upon himself as a being isolated from the rest of the world, made to govern it, and to direct every one according to his own will. He had no more regard for men than a foreman in a manufactory feels for his workpeople. The person to whom he was most attached was Duroc. "He loves me as a dog loves his master," was the expression he used in speaking to me about him. Berthier's feeling for him he compared to that of a child's nurse. These comparisons, far from being opposed to his theory of the motives which actuate men, were the natural consequence of it, for where he met with sentiments which he could not explain simply by self-interest, he attributed them to a kind of instinct.

Much has been said of Napoleon's superstition, and almost as much of his want of personal bravery. Both of these accusations rest either on false ideas or mistaken observations. Napoleon believed in fortune, and who has made the trial of it that he has? He liked to boast of his good star; he was very glad that the common herd was willing to believe him to be a privileged being; but he did not deceive himself about himself. What is more, he did not care to grant too large a share to fortune in considering his elevation. I have often heard him say, "They call me lucky, because I am able; it is weak men who accuse the strong of good fortune."

In private life, without being amiable, he was good-natured, and even carried indulgence to the point of weakness. A good son and good kinsman, with those little peculiarities that are met with more particularly in the family interiors of the Italian *bourgeoisie*, he allowed the extravagant courses of some of his relations without using sufficient strength of will to stop them, even when it would have been clearly to his interest to do so.

[1] Metternich, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 277–280.

His sisters, in particular, got from him everything that they wanted.

Neither of his wives ever had anything to complain of from Napoleon's personal manners. Although the fact is well known already, a saying of the Archduchess Marie Louise will put it in a new light. "I am sure," she said to me some time after her marriage, "that they think a great deal about me in Vienna, and that the general opinion is that I live a life of daily suffering. So true is it that truth is often not probable. I have no fear of Napoleon, but I begin to think that he is afraid of me."

Simple and even easy as he was in private life, he showed himself to little advantage in the great world. It is difficult to imagine anything more awkward than Napoleon's manner in a drawing room. The pains which he took to correct the faults of his nature and education only served to make his deficiencies more evident. I am satisfied that he would have made great sacrifices to add to his height and give dignity to his appearance, which became more common in proportion as his *embonpoint* increased. He walked by preference on tiptoe. His costumes were studied to form a contrast by comparison with the circle which surrounded him, either by their extreme simplicity or by their extreme magnificence. It is certain that he made Talma come to teach him particular attitudes. He showed much favor to this actor, and his affection was greatly founded on the likeness which really existed between them. He liked very much to see Talma on the stage; it might be said, in fact, that he saw himself reproduced. Out of his mouth there never came one graceful or even a well-turned speech to a woman, although the effort to make one was often expressed on his face and in the sound of his voice. . . .

163. Place in History [1]

In order to judge of this extraordinary man, we must follow him upon the grand theater for which he was born. Fortune

[1] Metternich, *Mémoires*, vol. i, pp. 281–286.

had no doubt done much for Napoleon; but by the force of his character, the activity and lucidity of his mind, and by his genius for the great combinations of military science, he had risen to the level of the position which she had destined for him. Having but one passion, that of power, he never lost either his time or his means on those objects which might have diverted him from his aim. Master of himself, he soon became master of men and events. In whatever time he had appeared, he would have played a prominent part. But the epoch when he first entered on his career was particularly fitted to facilitate his elevation. Surrounded by individuals who, in the midst of a world in ruins, walked at random without any fixed guidance, given up to all kinds of ambition and greed, he alone was able to form a plan, hold it fast, and conduct it to its conclusion. It was in the course of the second campaign in Italy that he conceived the one which was to carry him to the summit of power. "When I was young," he said to me, "I was revolutionary from ignorance and ambition. At the age of reason, I have followed its counsels and my own instinct, and I crushed the Revolution."

He was so accustomed to think of himself as necessary for the maintenance of the system he had created that at last he no longer understood how the world could go on without him. I have no doubt that he spoke from a deep and thorough conviction when, in our conversation at Dresden in 1813, he said to me these very words, "I shall perish, perhaps; but in my fall I shall drag down thrones, and with them the whole of society."

The prodigious successes of which his life was full had doubtless ended by blinding him; but up to the time of the campaign of 1812, when he for the first time succumbed under the weight of illusions, he never lost sight of the profound calculations by which he had so often conquered. Even after the disaster of Moscow, we have seen him defend himself with as much coolness as energy, and the campaign of 1814 was certainly the one in which he displayed most military talent, and

that with much reduced means. I have never been among those — and their number was considerable — who thought that after the events of 1814 and 1815 he tried to create a new career, by descending to the part of an adventurer, and by giving in to the most romantic projects. His character and the turn of his mind made him despise all that was petty. Like great gamblers, instead of being pleased with the chances of a petty game, they would have filled him with disgust.

It has often been asked whether Napoleon was radically good or bad. I have always thought that these epithets, as they are generally understood, are not applicable to a character such as his. Constantly occupied with one sole object, given up day and night to the task of holding the helm of an empire which, by progressive encroachments, had finished by including the interests of a great part of Europe, he never recoiled from fear of the wounds he might cause, nor even from the immense amount of individual suffering inseparable from the execution of his projects. As a war chariot crushes everything which it meets on its way, Napoleon thought of nothing but to advance. He took no notice of those who had not been on their guard; he was sometimes tempted to accuse them of stupidity. Unmoved by anything which was out of his path, he did not concern himself with it for good or evil. He could sympathize with family troubles, he was indifferent to political calamities. . . .

Napoleon had two aspects. As a private man, he was easy tempered and tractable, without being either good or bad. In his public capacity he admitted no sentiment; he was never influenced either by affection or by hatred. He crushed or removed his enemies, without thinking of anything but the necessity or advisability of getting rid of them. This object gained, he forgot them entirely and injured them no more. . . .

The opinion of the world is still divided, and perhaps will always be, on the question whether Napoleon did in fact deserve to be called a great man. It would be impossible to dispute the great qualities of one who, rising from obscurity,

became in a few years the strongest and most powerful of his contemporaries. But strength, power, and superiority are more or less relative terms. To appreciate properly the degree of genius which has been required for a man to dominate his age, it is necessary to have the measure of that age. This is the point from which opinions with regard to Napoleon diverge so essentially. If the era of the Revolution was, as its admirers think, the most brilliant, the most glorious epoch of modern history, Napoleon, who was able to take the first place in it, and to keep it for fifteen years, was certainly one of the greatest men who have ever appeared. If, on the contrary, he had only to move like a meteor above the mists of a general dissolution; if he had found nothing around him but the *débris* of a social condition ruined by the excess of false civilization; if he had only to combat a resistance weakened by universal lassitude, feeble rivalries, ignoble passions, in fact, adversaries everywhere disunited and paralyzed by their disagreements, the splendor of his success diminishes with the facility with which he obtained it. Now, as in our opinion, this was really the state of things, we are in no danger of exaggerating the idea of Napoleon's grandeur, though acknowledging that there was something extraordinary and imposing in his career.

The vast edifice which he constructed was exclusively the work of his hands, and he was himself the keystone of the arch. But this gigantic construction was essentially wanting in its foundation; the materials of which it was composed were nothing but the ruins of other buildings; some were rotten from decay, others had never possessed any consistency from their very beginning. The keystone of the arch has been withdrawn, and the whole edifice has fallen in.

Such is, in a few words, the history of the French Empire. Conceived and created by Napoleon, it only existed in him; and with him it was extinguished.

CHAPTER XXXIV

BISMARCK AND THE UNIFICATION OF GERMANY[1]

After Bismarck's dismissal in 1890 from the office of German Chancellor, he gave much time to the preparation of his memoirs. The groundwork of the first draft consisted of shorthand notes taken down at his dictation. These he carefully revised and supplemented with additions in his own hand. The manuscript was then privately printed and in this shape was subjected to additional revision and verification. We can be sure that the memoirs in their final form are exactly as Bismarck wished to leave them. They were not given to the world till 1898, a few months after their author's death.

164. "Blood and Iron"[2]

William I, on becoming regent of Prussia in 1858 and king three years later, surrounded himself with that group of brilliant men whose labors did so much to create modern Germany. As chief of the general staff of the army he appointed Helmuth von Moltke, as war minister he named Albrecht von Roon, and in 1862 he summoned Bismarck to be his minister-president and foreign minister. Bismarck's duty was to carry on the government against the wishes of the Prussian parliament, which did not approve William's policy of building up a large and efficient army. In the following narrative Bismarck explains how he strengthened the king's resolution at a time when there seemed to be danger of a revolution in Prussia.

In the beginning of October, 1862, I went as far as Jüterbogk to meet the king, who had been at Baden-Baden for September

[1] *Bismarck the Man and the Statesman. Being the Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto, Prince von Bismarck,* translated by A. J. Butler. 3 vols. Leipzig, 1899. Bernhard Tauchnitz.

[2] Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences,* vol. i, pp. 74–77.

30, his wife's birthday, and waited for him in the still unfinished railway station, filled with third-class travelers and workmen. My object, in taking this opportunity for an interview, was to set his Majesty at rest about a speech made by me in the Budget Commission on September 30, which had aroused some excitement, and which, though not taken down in shorthand, had still been reproduced with tolerable accuracy in the newspapers.

For people who were less embittered and blinded by ambition, I had indicated plainly enough the direction in which I was going. Prussia — such was the point of my speech — as a glance at the map will show, could no longer wear unaided on its long narrow figure the panoply which Germany required for its security; that must be equally distributed over all German peoples. We should get no nearer the goal by speeches, associations, decisions of majorities; we should be unable to avoid a serious contest, a contest which could only be settled by blood and iron. In order to secure our success in this, the deputies must place the greatest possible weight of blood and iron in the hands of the king of Prussia, in order that, according to his judgment, he might throw it into one scale or the other. . . .

Roon, who was present, expressed his dissatisfaction with my remarks on our way home, and said, among other things, that he did not regard these "witty digressions" as advantageous for our cause. For my part, I was torn between the desire of winning over members to an energetic national policy, and the danger of inspiring the king, whose own disposition was cautious and shrank from violent measures, with mistrust in me and my intentions. My object in going to meet him at Jüterbogk was to counteract betimes the probable effect of press criticisms.

I had some difficulty in discovering from the curt answers of the officials the section in the ordinary train in which the king was seated by himself in an ordinary first-class carriage. The after-effect of his conversation with his wife was an obvious depression, and when I begged for permission to narrate the events which had occurred during his absence, he interrupted

me with the words, "I can perfectly well see where all this will end. Over there, in front of the Opera House, under my windows, they will cut off your head, and mine a little while afterwards."

I guessed, and it was afterwards confirmed by witnesses, that during his week's stay at Baden-Baden his mind had been worked upon with variations on the theme of Polignac,[1] Strafford,[2] and Louis XVI.[3] When he was silent, I answered with the short remark, "*Et après, Sire?*" "*Après*, indeed; we shall be dead," answered the king. "Yes," I continued, "then we shall be dead; but we must all die sooner or later, and can we perish more honorably? I, fighting for my king's cause, and your Majesty sealing with your own blood your rights as king by the grace of God; whether on the scaffold or the battlefield, makes no difference in the glory of sacrificing life and limb for the rights assigned to you by the grace of God. Your Majesty must not think of Louis XVI; he lived and died in a condition of mental weakness, and does not present a heroic figure in history. Charles I, on the other hand, will always remain a noble historical character, for after drawing his sword for his rights and losing the battle, he did not hesitate to confirm his royal intent with his blood. Your Majesty is bound to fight, you cannot capitulate; you must, even at the risk of bodily danger, go forth to meet any attempt at coercion."

As I continued to speak in this sense, the king grew more and more animated, and began to assume the part of an officer fighting for kingdom and fatherland. In presence of external and personal danger he possessed a rare and absolutely natural fearlessness, whether on the field of battle or in the face of attempts on his life; his attitude in any external danger was elevating and inspiring. The ideal type of the Prussian officer who goes to meet certain death in the service with the simple words, "At your orders," but who, if he has to act on his own

[1] One of the French ministers held responsible for the policy which led to the deposition of Charles X and the revolution of July, 1830.

[2] See page 251. [3] See page 315.

responsibility, dreads the criticism of his superior officer or of the world more than death, even to the extent of allowing his energy and correct judgment to be impaired by the fear of blame and reproof — this type was developed in him to the highest degree. . . . To give up his life for king and fatherland was the duty of an officer; still more that of a king, as the first officer in the land. As soon as he regarded his position from the point of view of military honor, it had no more terror for him than the command to defend what might prove a desperate position would have for any ordinary Prussian officer. This raised him above the anxiety about the criticism which public opinion, history, and his wife might pass on his political tactics. . . . The correctness of my judgment was confirmed by the fact that the king, whom I had found at Jüterbogk weary, depressed, and discouraged, had, even before we arrived at Berlin, developed a cheerful, I might almost say joyous and combative disposition, which was plainly evident to the ministers and officials who received him on his arrival.

165. The Schleswig-Holstein Question [1]

When the Prussian parliament refused to grant appropriations for the enlarged army, Bismarck, with the king's consent, proceeded to govern the country by unconstitutional means. Taxes were arbitrarily levied and collected, and the necessary military reforms were then carried into effect. Meanwhile, fresh difficulties arose over the so-called Schleswig-Holstein question. These two duchies, though largely peopled by Germans, belonged to the crown of Denmark. On the death of the Danish king, Frederick VII, in 1863, Prince Frederick of Augustenburg came forward as a claimant for the duchies. His claims were strongly supported by the whole German nation, which desired to relieve the duchies from a foreign yoke. Bismarck, however, wanted to secure the duchies for Prussia, rather than allow them to become one more independent German state. With Austria as an ally, Bismarck in 1864 declared war on Denmark, not in support of Augustenburg, but on the ground that the Danish king was oppressing his German subjects. The unequal struggle soon ended with the surrender by Denmark of Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia and Austria.

[1] Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. ii, pp. 188–189.

The gradations which appeared attainable in the Schleswig-Holstein question, every one of them meaning for the duchies an advance to something better than the existing conditions, culminated, in my judgment, in the acquisition of the duchies by Prussia, a view which I expressed in a council held immediately after the death of Frederick VII. I reminded the king that every one of his immediate ancestors, not even excepting his brother, had won an increment of territory for the state: Frederick William IV had acquired Hohenzollern and the Jahde district; Frederick William III, the Rhine province; Frederick William II, Poland; Frederick II, Silesia; Frederick William I, old Hither Pomerania; the Great Elector, Further Pomerania and Magdeburg, Minden, etc., and I encouraged him to do likewise. . . .

If the utmost we aimed at could not be realized, we might have gone as far as the introduction of the Augustenburg dynasty and the establishment of a new middle state, provided the Prussian and German national interests had been put on a sure footing — these interests to be protected by what was the essential part of the subsequent conditions — that is, a military convention, Kiel as a harbor, and the Baltic and North Sea canal.

Even if, taking into consideration the European situation and the wish of the king, this had not been attainable without the isolation of Prussia from all the Great Powers, including Austria — the question was in what way, whether under the form of a personal union or under some other, a provisional settlement was attainable as regards the duchies, which must in any case be an improvement in their position. From the very beginning I kept annexation steadily before my eyes.

166. Peace with Austria [1]

As Bismarck anticipated, the Danish War led to a quarrel between Austria and Prussia about the disposition of the conquered duchies. Austria wanted to hand them over to Augustenburg, but Bismarck

[1] Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. ii, pp. 227–234.

would not consent to this arrangement. The question was temporarily settled by Prussia taking Schleswig and Austria, Holstein. Bismarck now made ready for war with Austria. Only by force, he believed, could that power be displaced from German politics and a new Germany be built up about Prussia. The first step was to isolate Austria from foreign support. This Bismarck did by securing the friendly neutrality of France and by arranging a treaty of alliance with Italy. The second step was to find a good pretext for attacking Austria. Here also Bismarck's clever diplomacy accomplished its purpose. In the Seven Weeks' War, which followed, Austria suffered the decisive defeat of Sadowa and at once sued for peace. Bismarck at this time showed the foresight of a true statesman. Having brought about the war for a purpose, namely, the exclusion of Austria from Germany, he held that Prussia should not humble her adversary further by taking any Austrian territory. Austria, Bismarck reasoned, might become a valuable ally in the near future, if she were now treated with moderation.

I was firmly resolved, in consequence of the above considerations, to make a cabinet question of the acceptance of the peace offered by Austria. The position was difficult. All the generals shared the disinclination to break off the uninterrupted course of victory; and during these days the king was more often and more readily accessible to military influences than to mine. I was the only person at headquarters who was politically responsible as a minister and forced by the exigencies of the situation to form an opinion and come to a decision without being able to lay the responsibility for the result upon any other authority. . . . I was just as little able as anyone to foresee what shape future events would take, and the consequent judgment of the world; but I was the only one present who was under a legal obligation to hold, to utter, and to defend an opinion. This opinion I had formed after careful consideration of the future of our position in Germany and our relations to Austria; and was ready to be responsible for it and to defend it before the king. . . .

On July 23, 1866, under the presidency of the king, a council of war was held, in which the question to be decided was whether we should make peace under the conditions offered or continue

the war. A painful illness from which I was suffering made it necessary that the council should be held in my room. On this occasion I was the only civilian in uniform. I declared it to be my conviction that peace must be concluded on the Austrian terms, but remained alone in my opinion; the king supported the military majority. My nerves could not stand the strain which had been put upon them day and night; I got up in silence, walked into my adjoining bedchamber, and was there overcome by a violent paroxysm of tears. Meanwhile, I heard the council dispersing in the next room. I thereupon set to work to commit to paper the reasons which in my opinion spoke for the conclusion of peace; and begged the king, in the event of his not accepting the advice for which I was responsible, to relieve me of my functions as minister if the war were continued. With this document I set out on the following day to explain it by word of mouth. In the antechamber I found two colonels with a report on the spread of cholera among their troops, barely half of whom were fit for service. The alarming figures confirmed my resolve to make the acceptance of the Austrian terms a cabinet question. . . . Armed with my document, I unfolded to the king the political and military reasons which opposed the continuation of the war.

We had to avoid wounding Austria too severely; we had to avoid leaving behind in her any unnecessary bitterness of feeling or desire for revenge; we ought rather to reserve the possibility of becoming friends again with our adversary of the moment, and in any case to regard the Austrian state as a piece on the European chessboard and the renewal of friendly relations with her as a move open to us. If Austria were severely injured, she would become the ally of France and of every other opponent of ours; she would even sacrifice her anti-Russian interests for the sake of revenge on Prussia. . . .

To all this the king raised no objection, but declared the actual terms inadequate, without, however, definitely formulating his own demands. . . . He said that the chief culprit could

not be allowed to escape unpunished, and that justice once satisfied, we could let the misguided partners off more easily, and he insisted on the cessions of territory from Austria. I replied that we were not there to sit in judgment, but to pursue the German policy. Austria's conflict in rivalry with us was no more culpable than ours with her; our task was the establishment or initiation of German national unity under the leadership of the king of Prussia. . . .

What seemed to me to be paramount with his Majesty was the aversion of the military party to interrupt the victorious course of the army. The resistance which I was obliged, in accordance with my convictions, to offer to the king's views with regard to following up the military successes, and to his inclination to continue the victorious advance, excited him to such a degree that a prolongation of the discussion became impossible; and, under the impression that my opinion was rejected, I left the room with the idea of begging the king to allow me, in my capacity of officer, to join my regiment. On returning to my room I was in the mood that the thought occurred to me whether it would not be better to fall out of the open window, which was four stories high; and did not look round when I heard the door open, although I suspected that the person entering was the Crown Prince,[1] whose room in the same corridor I had just passed. I felt his hand on my shoulder, while he said, "You know that I was against this war. You considered it necessary, and the responsibility for it lies on you. If you are now persuaded that our end is attained, and peace must now be concluded, I am ready to support you and defend your opinion with my father."

He then repaired to the king, and came back after a short half-hour, in the same calm, friendly mood, but with the words, "It has been a very difficult business, but my father has consented." This consent found expression in a note written with a lead pencil upon the margin of one of my last memoranda,

[1] Afterwards the Emperor Frederick III, who died in 1888 after a reign of only ninety-nine days.

something to this effect: "Inasmuch as my Minister-President has left me in the lurch in the face of the enemy, and here I am not in a position to supply his place, I have discussed the question with my son; and as he has associated himself with the Minister-President's opinion, I find myself reluctantly compelled, after such brilliant victories on the part of the army, to bite this sour apple and accept so disgraceful a peace." I do not think I am mistaken as to the exact words, although the document is not accessible to me at present. In any case I have given the sense of it; and, despite its bitterness of expression, it was to me a joyful release from a tension that was becoming unbearable. I gladly accepted the royal assent to what I regarded as politically necessary, without taking offense at its ungracious form. At this time military impressions were dominant in the king's mind; and the strong need he felt of pursuing the hitherto dazzling course of victory perhaps influenced him more than political and diplomatic considerations.

By the Peace of Prague (1866), which concluded the Seven Weeks' War, Austria relinquished her claims upon Holstein, consented to the dissolution of the old Germanic Confederation, and recognized Prussian leadership in Germany. Prussia now annexed the kingdom of Hanover, together with several other German powers which had sided with Austria in the war. Bismarck formed all the independent states north of the river Main into the North German Confederation, under the presidency of Prussia (1867). This was a great advance toward German unity. Baden, Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Hesse-Darmstadt, the four states south of the Main, did not enter the confederation, partly because they distrusted Prussia and partly because of French opposition to such a union.

167. The Ems Telegram [1]

With his usual prescience Bismarck realized that a war with France "lay in the logic of history." The French emperor, Napoleon III, would never submit without a struggle to the formation of a strong German empire right on the border of France. Bismarck, for his part, welcomed a contest with France. If successful, it would bring the South German states into an intimate alliance with the North

[1] Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. ii, pp. 278–283.

German Confederation; it would complete the work of unification under Prussia. After 1867 both France and Prussia prepared for the inevitable conflict. In 1870, when Prussia was ready, Bismarck brought it on in the following manner. The throne of Spain had become vacant and the Spaniards offered the crown to a cousin of King William. Napoleon at once informed the Prussian monarch that he would regard the accession of a Hohenzollern to the Spanish throne as a sufficient justification for war. In the face of this threat, William gave way and induced his cousin to decline the honor. Then Napoleon went further and instructed the French ambassador to Prussia, Count Benedetti, to secure a pledge from William that a Hohenzollern prince would never, under any circumstances, become a candidate for the Spanish throne This pledge William refused to make, and from the watering-place of Ems, where he was then staying, telegraphed his decision to Bismarck at Berlin. Bismarck at the time was dining with Roon and Moltke.

During our conversation I was informed that a telegram from Ems, in cipher, if I recollect rightly, of about 200 "groups," was being deciphered. When the copy was handed to me, it showed that Abeken had drawn up and signed the telegram at his Majesty's command, and I read it out to my guests, whose dejection was so great that they turned away from food and drink.

On a repeated examination of the document I lingered upon the authorization of his Majesty, which included a command, immediately to communicate Benedetti's fresh demand and its rejection both to our ambassadors and to the press. I put a few questions to Moltke as to the extent of his confidence in the state of our preparations, especially as to the time they would still require in order to meet this sudden risk of war. He answered that if there was to be war he expected no advantage to us by deferring its outbreak; and even if we should not be strong enough at first to protect all the territories on the left bank of the Rhine against French invasion, our preparations would nevertheless soon overtake those of the French, while at a later period this advantage would be diminished; he regarded a rapid outbreak as, on the whole, more favorable to us than delay.

In view of the attitude of France, our national sense of honor compelled us, in my opinion, to go to war; and if we did not act according to the demands of this feeling, we should lose, when on the way to its completion, the entire impetus toward our national development won in 1866, while the German national feeling south of the Main, aroused by our military successes in 1866, and shown by the readiness of the southern states to enter the alliances, would have to grow cold again. . . . Under this conviction I made use of the royal authorization, communicated to me through Abeken, to publish the contents of the telegram; and in the presence of my two guests I reduced the telegram by striking out words, but without adding or altering, to the following form:

"After the news of the renunciation of the hereditary prince of Hohenzollern had been officially communicated to the imperial government of France by the royal government of Spain, the French ambassador at Ems further demanded of his Majesty the king that he would authorize him to telegraph to Paris that his Majesty the king bound himself for all future time never again to give his consent if the Hohenzollerns should renew their candidature. His Majesty the king thereupon decided not to receive the French ambassador again, and sent to tell him through the aide-de-camp on duty that his Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the ambassador." The difference in the effect of the abbreviated text of the Ems telegram, as compared with that produced by the original, was not the result of stronger words but of the form, which made this announcement appear decisive, while Abeken's version would only have been regarded as a fragment of a negotiation still pending, and to be continued at Berlin.

After I had read out the concentrated edition to my two guests, Moltke remarked, "Now it has a different ring; it sounded before like a parley; now it is like a flourish in answer to a challenge." I went on to explain, "If in execution of his Majesty's order I at once communicate this text, which contains no alteration in or addition to the telegram, not only to

the newspapers, but also by telegraph to all our embassies, it will be known in Paris before midnight, and not only on account of its contents, but also on account of the manner of its distribution, will have the effect of a red rag upon the Gallic bull. Fight we must if we do not want to act the part of the vanquished without a battle. Success, however, essentially depends upon the impressions which the origination of the war makes upon us and others; it is important that we should be the party attacked, and this Gallic overweening and touchiness will bring about this result if we announce in the face of Europe . . . that we fearlessly meet the public threats of France."

This explanation brought about in the two generals a revulsion to a more joyous mood, the liveliness of which surprised me. They had suddenly recovered their pleasure in eating and drinking and spoke in a more cheerful vein. Roon said, "Our God of old lives still and will not let us perish in disgrace." Moltke so far relinquished his passive equanimity that, glancing up joyously toward the ceiling and abandoning his usual punctiliousness of speech, he smote his hand upon his breast and said, "If I may but live to lead our armies in such a war, then the Devil may come directly afterwards and fetch away the 'old carcass.'" He was less robust at that time than afterwards, and doubted whether he would survive the hardships of the campaign.

168. The Imperial Title [1]

The successful issue of the war with France completed Bismarck's work of unifying Germany The four South German states came into the North German Confederation, which was now to be turned into the German Empire. On January 18, 1871, in the palace of Louis XIV at Versailles, and before an imposing company of sovereigns, princes and generals, King William of Prussia read the document proclaiming the reëstablishment of the German Empire. William, it seems, did not care in the least for the imperial title and would gladly have remained merely president of the Confederation. Bismarck overcame the king's reluctance to be named emperor only to encounter another obstacle.

[1] Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. iii, pp. 49–52.

His Majesty raised a fresh difficulty when we were fixing the form of the imperial title, it being his wish to be called Emperor of Germany, if emperor it had to be. In this situation both the Crown Prince, who had long given up his idea of a King of the Germans, and the Grand Duke of Baden lent me their support, each in his own way. . . . The Crown Prince supported me passively with his company in the presence of his father and by occasional brief expressions of his views. These, however, did not strengthen me in my stand against the king, but tended rather to excite further the irritability of my august master. . . .

In the final conference on January 17, 1871, he declined the designation of German Emperor, and declared that he would be Emperor of Germany or no emperor at all. I pointed out that the adjectival form German Emperor and the genitival Emperor of Germany differed in point both of language and period. People had said Roman Emperor and not Emperor of Rome; and the Tsar did not call himself Emperor of Russia, but Russian, as well as "united-Russian," Emperor. . . . I further urged that under Frederick the Great and Frederick William II the thalers were inscribed *Borussorum* not *Borussiæ rex* [1] and that the title Emperor of Germany involved a sovereign claim to the non-Prussian dominions, which the princes were not inclined to allow. . . .

The discussion then turned upon the difference in rank between emperors and kings, between archdukes, grand dukes, and Prussian princes. My exposition that in principle emperors do not rank above kings found no acceptance, although I was able to show that Frederick William I, at a meeting with Charles VI, who, in point of fact, stood in the position of feudal lord to the Elector of Brandenburg, claimed and enforced his rights to equality as King of Prussia by causing a pavilion to be erected which was entered by both monarchs simultaneously from opposite sides, so that they might meet each other in the center.

The agreement which the Crown Prince showed to my argu-

[1] "King of the Prussians," not "King of Prussia."

ment irritated the old gentleman still more, and striking the table he cried, "And even if it had been so, *I* now command how it is to be. Archdukes and grand dukes have always had precedence of Prussian princes, and so it shall continue." With that he got up and went to the window, turning his back upon those seated at the table. The discussion on the question of title came to no clear conclusion; nevertheless, we considered ourselves justified in preparing the ceremony for the proclamation of the emperor, but the king had commanded that there should be no mention of the German Emperor but of the Emperor of Germany.

This position of affairs induced me to call upon the Grand Duke of Baden on the following morning, before the solemnity in the *Galerie des Glaces*,[1] and to ask him how he, as the first of the princes present, who would presumably be the first to speak after the reading of the proclamation, intended to designate the new emperor. The Grand Duke replied, "As Emperor of Germany, according to his Majesty's orders." Among the arguments with which I urged upon the Grand Duke that the concluding cheers for the emperor could not be given under this form, the most effective was my appeal to the fact that the forthcoming text of the constitution of the empire was already forestalled by a decree of the Reichstag in Berlin. The reference to the resolution of the Reichstag, appealing, as it did, to his constitutional train of ideas, induced him to go and see the king once more. I was left ignorant of what passed between the two sovereigns, and during the reading of the proclamation I was in a state of suspense. The Grand Duke avoided the difficulty by raising a cheer, neither for the German Emperor nor for the Emperor of Germany, but for the *Emperor William*. His Majesty was so offended at the course I had adopted, that, on descending from the raised daïs of the princes, he ignored me as I stood alone upon the free space before it, and passed me by in order to shake hands with the generals standing behind me. He maintained that attitude for several days, until gradually our mutual relations returned to their old form.

[1] "Gallery of Mirrors."

CHAPTER XXXV

DIPLOMACY OF THE GREAT WAR[1]

THE official documents relating to the outbreak of the war in 1914 were soon published and are accessible in English translations. It is well to remember that they were specially prepared for publication; furthermore, that they cannot give adequate information of the personal factor which is so important in all diplomatic matters. There is no reason, however, to doubt the authenticity of this diplomatic correspondence, which the various European governments have presented to the world. The letters and dispatches printed in the *British White Book*, the *German White Book*, the *Russian Orange Book*, the *Belgian Gray Book*, the *French Yellow Book*, the *Austro-Hungarian Red Book*, and the *Serbian Blue Book* confirm one another's statements in a remarkable manner.

169. The Austrian Note to Serbia[2]

The note which the Austro-Hungarian government addressed to the Serbian government on July 24 set forth the grievances which Austria-Hungary believed herself to have against Serbia. It referred particularly to the assassination on June 28 at Serajevo of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Hapsburg throne, and his wife, by political conspirators of Serbian nationality or sympathy. In effect, though not in form, the note was an ultimatum, for it required Serbia, by six o'clock on the evening of July 25, to accept or reject the following demands.

"The royal government of Serbia condemns the propaganda directed against Austria-Hungary, the general tendency of

[1] *Collected Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War.* London, 1915. His Majesty's Stationery Office.

[2] *British White Book*, No. 4.

which is to detach from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy territories belonging to it, and it sincerely deplores the fatal consequences of these criminal proceedings.

"The royal government regrets that Serbian officers and functionaries participated in the above-mentioned propaganda and thus compromised the good neighborly relations to which the royal government was solemnly pledged by its declaration of March 31, 1909.

"The royal government, which disapproves and repudiates all idea of interfering or attempting to interfere with the destinies of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, considers it a duty formally to warn officers and functionaries, and the whole population of the kingdom, that henceforth it will proceed with the utmost rigor against persons who may be guilty of such machinations, which it will use all its efforts to anticipate and suppress."

This declaration shall simultaneously be communicated to the royal army as an order of the day by his Majesty the king and shall be published in the *Official Bulletin* of the army.

The royal Serbian government further undertakes: —

1. To suppress any publication which incites to hatred and contempt of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the general tendency of which is directed against its territorial integrity;

2. To dissolve immediately the society styled "Narodna Odbrana," to confiscate all its means of propaganda, and to proceed in the same manner against other societies and their branches in Serbia which engage in propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The royal government shall take the necessary measures to prevent the societies dissolved from continuing their activity under another name and form;

3. To eliminate without delay from public instruction in Serbia, both as regards the teaching body and also as regards the methods of instruction, everything that serves, or might serve, to foment the propaganda against Austria-Hungary;

4. To remove from the military service, and from the administration in general, all officers and functionaries guilty of

propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, whose names and deeds the Austro-Hungarian government reserves to itself the right of communicating to the royal government of Serbia;

5. To accept the collaboration in Serbia of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian government for the suppression of the subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the monarchy;

6. To take judicial proceedings against accessories to the plot of June 28 who are on Serbian territory; delegates of the Austro-Hungarian government will take part in the investigation relating thereto;

7. To proceed without delay to the arrest of Major Voija Tankositch and of the individual named Milan Ciganovitch, a Serbian state employee, who have been compromised by the results of the magisterial inquiry at Serajevo;

8. To prevent by effective measures the coöperation of the Serbian authorities in the illicit traffic in arms and explosives across the frontier, to dismiss and punish severely the officials of the frontier service at Schabatz and Ložnica guilty of having assisted the perpetrators of the Serajevo crime by facilitating their passage across the frontier;

9. To furnish the Austro-Hungarian government with explanations regarding the unjustifiable utterances of high Serbian officials, both in Serbia and abroad, who, notwithstanding their official position, have not hesitated since the crime of June 28 to express themselves in interviews in terms of hostility to the Austro-Hungarian government; and, finally,

10. To notify the Austro-Hungarian government without delay of the execution of the measures comprised under the preceding heads.

To these demands Serbia made answer on July 25, shortly before the expiration of the time limit. The Serbian government agreed to hand over for trial any subject of whose complicity in the crime of Serajevo proofs were forthcoming, and also to publish an official statement condemning the propaganda directed against Austria-Hungary.

Nearly all the other Austrian demands were accepted by the Serbian government, which offered, in case its reply was considered unsatisfactory, to refer the questions at issue to the Hague Tribunal or to the mediation of the Great Powers. The Austrian government rejected this reply as insincere and only "a play for time," and on July 28 declared war against Serbia.

170. Dispatches between Kaiser and Tsar [1]

The issuance of the Austrian ultimatum precipitated a crisis. The peace of Europe was gravely threatened. Russia, the greatest of Slavic nations, whose interest in the Balkans was well known, could not regard without concern the crushing of a smaller Slavic state. But if Russia intervened to protect Serbia, by making war on Austria-Hungary, then Germany, as the latter's ally, would surely attack Russia, and France, bound to Russia in firm alliance, would be obliged to attack Germany. To prevent the catastrophe of a general European war, peace parleys began at once. The most important suggestion was made by Sir Edward Grey, the British Minister for Foreign Affairs. He proposed that the four powers not directly interested in the dispute, namely, Germany, France, Italy, and England, should mediate between Vienna and St. Petersburg. Austria-Hungary, however, refused to accept any outside interference in settling what it regarded as a private quarrel with Serbia. The Austrian declaration of war against Serbia on July 28 was followed on the same day by the beginning of Russian mobilization. On the evening of the 28th the Kaiser, who had returned to Berlin from a holiday in Norway, sent the following telegram to his cousin, the Tsar.

I have heard with the greatest anxiety of the impression which is caused by the action of Austria-Hungary against Serbia. The unscrupulous agitation which has been going on for years in Serbia, has led to the revolting crime of which Archduke Franz Ferdinand has become a victim. The spirit which made the Serbians murder their own king and his consort still dominates that country. Doubtless you will agree with me that both of us, you as well as I, and all other sovereigns, have a common interest to insist that all those who are responsible for this horrible murder shall suffer their deserved punishment.

On the other hand, I by no means overlook the difficulty

[1] *German White Book*, exhibits Nos. 20–23a.

encountered by you and your government to stem the tide of public opinion. In view of the cordial friendship which has joined us both for a long time with firm ties, I shall use my entire influence to induce Austria-Hungary to obtain a frank and satisfactory understanding with Russia. I hope confidently that you will support me in my efforts to overcome all difficulties which may yet arise.

To this telegram the Tsar, early in the morning of July 29, replied as follows:

I am glad that you are back in Germany. In this serious moment I ask you earnestly to help me. An ignominious war has been declared against a weak country, and in Russia the indignation which I fully share is tremendous. I fear that very soon I shall be unable to resist the pressure exercised upon me and that I shall be forced to take measures which will lead to war. To prevent such a calamity as a European war would be, I urge you, in the name of our old friendship, to do all in your power to restrain your ally from going too far.

Later in the same day the Kaiser sent this message to the Tsar.

I have received your telegram and I share your desire for the preservation of peace. However, I cannot — as I told you in my first telegram — consider the action of Austria-Hungary as an "ignominious war." Austria-Hungary knows from experience that the promises of Serbia, as long as they are merely on paper, are entirely unreliable.

According to my opinion the action of Austria-Hungary is to be considered as an attempt to receive full guaranty that the promises of Serbia are effectively translated into deeds. In this opinion I am strengthened by the explanation of the Austrian cabinet that Austria-Hungary intended no territorial gain at the expense of Serbia. I am therefore of opinion that it is perfectly possible for Russia to remain a spectator in the Austro-Serbian war, without drawing Europe into the most terrible war it has ever seen. I believe that a direct understanding is possible and desirable between your government

and Vienna, an understanding which — as I have already telegraphed you — my government endeavors to aid with all possible effort. Naturally, military measures by Russia, which might be construed as menace by Austria-Hungary, would accelerate a calamity which both of us desire to avoid and would undermine my position as mediator, which — upon your appeal to my friendship and aid — I willingly accepted.

A few hours later, on the morning of July 30, the Kaiser sent another message, stronger in tone.

My ambassador has instructions to direct the attention of your government to the dangers and serious consequences of a mobilization. I have told you the same in my last telegram. Austria-Hungary has mobilized only against Serbia, and only a part of her army. If Russia, as seems to be the case, according to your advice and that of your government, mobilizes against Austria-Hungary, the rôle of mediator with which you have intrusted me in such friendly manner and which I have accepted upon your express desire, is threatened, if not made impossible. The entire weight of decision now rests upon your shoulders: you have to bear the responsibility for war or peace.

The Tsar, on the afternoon of July 30, made this answer:

I thank you from my heart for your quick reply. I am sending to-night Tatisheff (Russian honorary aide to the Kaiser) with instructions. The military measures now taking form were decided upon five days ago, and for the reason of defense against the preparations of Austria. I hope with all my heart that these measures will not influence in any manner your position as mediator, which I appraise very highly. We need your strong pressure upon Austria so that an understanding can be arrived at with us.

The situation quickly became acute. The two rulers exchanged further telegrams without result, since Russia refused to discontinue military preparations as long as Austria-Hungary was actually at war with Serbia. On the night of July 31 the German government sent

an ultimatum to Russia demanding demobilization of the Russian army, in default of which Germany would herself mobilize. Having received no answer to the ultimatum, Germany on August 1 declared war against Russia.

171. The Attitude of England [1]

War between Germany and Russia meant also the breaking out of hostilities between Germany and France. Under such circumstances what would be England's attitude? That country at first refused to take sides. Finally, on July 29 Sir Edward Grey informed the German ambassador in London that if France were involved England would be drawn into the conflict. At this very time the German Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, held an interview with the British Ambassador in Berlin for the purpose of securing England's neutrality. If England would remain aloof, Germany would agree not to take any French territory in Europe, should the German arms be victorious. The Chancellor refused, however, to give any assurance that the French colonies would remain untouched. Sir Edward Grey's reply to this offer, as sent to the British Ambassador at Berlin, was in these words:

His Majesty's government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal to bind itself to neutrality on such terms.

What he asks us in effect is to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten, as long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies.

From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable, for France, without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power and become subordinate to German policy.

Altogether apart from that, it would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover.

The Chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligation or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either.

Having said so much it is unnecessary to examine whether

[1] *British White Book*, No. 101.

the prospect of a future general neutrality agreement between England and Germany offered positive advantages sufficient to compensate us for tieing our hands now. We must preserve our full freedom to act as circumstances may seem to us to require, in any such unfavorable and regrettable development of the present crisis as the Chancellor contemplates.

You should speak to the Chancellor in the above sense, and add most earnestly that the one way of maintaining the good relations between England and Germany is that they should continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe; if we succeed in this object, the mutual relations of Germany and England will, I believe, be *ipso facto* improved and strengthened. For that object his Majesty's government will work in that way with all sincerity and good-will.

And I will say this: If the peace of Europe can be preserved, and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavor will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it, as far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and, Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea has hitherto been too utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has gone through for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the relief and reaction which will follow may make possible some more definite understanding between the Powers than has been possible hitherto.

172. Belgian Neutrality [1]

To both England and France the preservation of the neutrality of Belgium was of the utmost importance. On August 1, two days before the German declaration of war against France, the French Minister at Brussels, acting on instructions from his government, made the following communication to the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs:

[1] *Belgian Gray Book*, Nos. 15, 20, 22.

I am authorized to declare that, in the event of an international war, the French government, in accordance with the declarations it has always made, will respect the neutrality of Belgium. In the event of this neutrality not being respected by another power, the French government, to secure its own defense, might find it necessary to modify its attitude.

On August 2 the German minister at Brussels presented this note to the Belgian Foreign Minister:

Reliable information has been received by the German government to the effect that French forces intend to march on the line of the Meuse by Givet and Namur. This information leaves no doubt as to the intention of France to march through Belgian territory against Germany.

The German government cannot but fear that Belgium, in spite of the utmost goodwill, will be unable, without assistance, to repel so considerable a French invasion with sufficient prospect of success to afford an adequate guarantee against danger to Germany. It is essential for the self-defense of Germany that she should anticipate any such hostile attack. The German government would, however, feel the deepest regret if Belgium regarded as an act of hostility against herself the fact that the measures of Germany's opponents force Germany, for her own protection, to enter Belgian territory.

In order to exclude any possibility of misunderstanding, the German government makes the following declaration:

1. Germany has in view no act of hostility against Belgium. In the event of Belgium being prepared in the coming war to maintain an attitude of friendly neutrality toward Germany, the German government binds itself, at the conclusion of peace, to guarantee the possessions and independence of the Belgian Kingdom in full.

2. Germany undertakes, under the above-mentioned condition, to evacuate Belgian territory on the conclusion of peace.

3. If Belgium adopts a friendly attitude, Germany is prepared, in coöperation with the Belgian authorities, to purchase

all necessaries for her troops against a cash payment, and to pay an indemnity for any damage that may have been caused by German troops.

4. Should Belgium oppose the German troops, and in particular should she throw difficulties in the way of their march by a resistance of the fortresses on the Meuse, or by destroying railways, roads, tunnels, or other similar works, Germany will, to her regret, be compelled to consider Belgium as an enemy.

In this event, Germany can undertake no obligations toward Belgium, but the eventual adjustment of the relations between the two states must be left to the decision of arms.

The German government, however, entertains the distinct hope that this eventuality will not occur, and that the Belgian government will know how to take the necessary measures to prevent the occurrence of incidents such as those mentioned. In this case the friendly ties which bind the two neighboring states will grow stronger and more enduring.

The answer which the Belgian government made on August 3 was in these words:

This note has made a deep and painful impression upon the Belgian government.

The intentions attributed to France by Germany are in contradiction to the formal declarations made to us on August 1, in the name of the French government.

Moreover, if, contrary to our expectation, Belgian neutrality should be violated by France, Belgium intends to fulfill her international obligations and the Belgian army would offer the most vigorous resistance to the invader.

The treaties of 1839, confirmed by the treaties of 1870, vouch for the independence and neutrality of Belgium under the guaranty of the Powers, and notably of the government of his Majesty the king of Prussia.

Belgium has always been faithful to her international obligations, she has carried out her duties in a spirit of loyal

impartiality, and she has left nothing undone to maintain and enforce respect for her neutrality.

The attack upon her independence with which the German government threatens her constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. No strategic interest justifies such a violation of law.

The Belgian government, if it was to accept the proposals submitted to them, would sacrifice the honor of the nation and betray its duty toward Europe.

Conscious of the part which Belgium has played for more than eighty years in the civilization of the world, it refuses to believe that the independence of Belgium can only be preserved at the price of the violation of her neutrality.

If this hope is disappointed, the Belgian government is firmly resolved to repel, by all the means in its power, every attack upon its rights.

173. Speech of the German Chancellor [1]

This series of diplomatic interchanges may fitly close with the historic speech of Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg before the Reichstag on August 4. It explains the causes of the war from the German standpoint.

A stupendous fate is breaking over Europe. For forty-four years, since the time we fought for and won the German Empire and our position in the world, we have lived in peace and have protected the peace of Europe. In the works of peace we have become strong and powerful, and have faced the fact that, under the pretense that Germany was desirous of war, enmity has been awakened against us in the East and the West, and chains have been fashioned for us. The wind then sown has brought forth the whirlwind which has now broken loose. We wished to continue our work of peace, and, like a silent vow, the feeling that animated every one from the Kaiser down to the youngest soldier was this: Only in defense of a just cause shall our sword fly from its scabbard.

[1] *Collected Diplomatic Documents*, pp. 436–439.

The day has now come when we must draw it, against our wish, and in spite of our sincere endeavors. Russia has set fire to the building. We are at war with Russia and France — a war that has been forced upon us.

Gentlemen, a number of documents, composed during the pressure of these last eventful days, are before you. Allow me to emphasize the facts that determine our attitude.

From the first moment of the Austro-Serbian conflict we declared that this question must be limited to Austria-Hungary and Serbia, and we worked with this end in view. All governments, especially that of Great Britain, took the same attitude. Russia alone asserted that she had to be heard in the settlement of this matter.

Thus the danger of a European crisis raised its threatening head.

As soon as the first definite information regarding the military preparations in Russia reached us, we declared at St. Petersburg, in a friendly but emphatic manner, that military measures against Austria would find us on the side of our ally, and that military preparations against ourselves would oblige us to take counter-measures; but that mobilization would come very near to actual war.

Russia assured us in the most solemn manner of her desire for peace, and declared that she was making no military preparations against us.

In the meantime, Great Britain, warmly supported by us, tried to mediate between Vienna and St. Petersburg.

On July 28 the Kaiser telegraphed to the Tsar, asking him to take into consideration the fact that it was both the duty and the right of Austria-Hungary to defend herself against the pan-Serb agitation which threatened to undermine her existence. The Kaiser drew the Tsar's attention to the solidarity of the interests of all monarchs in face of the murder of Serajevo. He asked for the latter's personal assistance in smoothing over the difficulties existing between Vienna and St. Petersburg. About the same time, and before receipt of this telegram,

the Tsar asked the Kaiser to come to his aid and to induce Vienna to moderate her demands. The Kaiser accepted the rôle of mediator.

But scarcely had active steps on these lines begun, when Russia mobilized all her forces directed against Austria, while Austria-Hungary had mobilized only those of her forces which were directed against Serbia. To the north she had mobilized only two army corps, far from the Russian frontier. The Kaiser immediately informed the Tsar that this mobilization of Russian forces against Austria rendered the rôle of mediator, which he had accepted at the Tsar's request, difficult, if not impossible.

In spite of this we continued our task of mediation at Vienna and carried it to the utmost point which was compatible with our position as an ally.

Meanwhile Russia of her own accord renewed her assurances that she was making no military preparations against us.

We come now to July 31. The decision was to be taken at Vienna. Through our representations we had already obtained the resumption of direct conversations between Vienna and St. Petersburg, after they had been for some time interrupted. But before the final decision was taken at Vienna, the news arrived that Russia had mobilized her entire forces and that her mobilization was therefore directed against us also. The Russian government, which knew from our repeated statements what mobilization on our frontiers meant, did not notify us of this mobilization, nor did it even offer any explanation. It was not until the afternoon of July 31 that the Kaiser received a telegram from the Tsar in which he guaranteed that his army would not assume a provocative attitude toward us. But mobilization on our frontiers had been in full swing since the night of July 30-31.

While we were mediating at Vienna in compliance with Russia's request, Russian forces were appearing all along our extended and almost entirely open frontier, and France, though indeed not actually mobilizing, was admittedly making military preparations. What was our position? For the sake of the

peace of Europe we had, up till then, deliberately refrained from calling up a single reservist. Were we now to wait further in patience until the nations on either side of us chose the moment for their attack? It would have been a crime to expose Germany to such peril. Therefore, on July 31 we called upon Russia to demobilize, as the only measure which could still preserve the peace of Europe. The Imperial Ambassador at St. Petersburg was also instructed to inform the Russian government that, in case our demand met with a refusal, we should have to consider that a state of war existed.

The Imperial Ambassador has executed these instructions. We have not yet learned what Russia answered to our demand for demobilization. Telegraphic reports on this question have not reached us, even though the wires still transmitted much less important information.

Therefore, the time limit having long since expired, the Kaiser was obliged to mobilize our forces on August 1 at 5 P.M.

At the same time we had to make certain what attitude France would assume. To our direct question, whether she would remain neutral in the event of a Russo-German War, France replied that she would do what her interests demanded. That was an evasion, if not a refusal. . . .

Gentlemen, we are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxemburg and perhaps have already entered Belgian territory.

Gentlemen, that is a breach of international law. It is true that the French government declared at Brussels that France would respect Belgian neutrality as long as her adversary respected it. We knew, however, that France stood ready for an invasion. France could wait, we could not. A French attack on our flank on the lower Rhine might have been disastrous. Thus we were forced to ignore the rightful protests of the governments of Luxemburg and Belgium. The wrong — I speak openly — the wrong we thereby commit we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been attained.

He who is menaced as we are and is fighting for his highest possession can only consider how he is to hack his way through.

Gentlemen, we stand shoulder to shoulder with Austria-Hungary.

As for Great Britain's attitude, the statements made by Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons yesterday show the standpoint assumed by the British Government. We have informed the British Government that, as long as Great Britain remains neutral, our fleet will not attack the northern coast of France, and that we will not violate the territorial integrity and independence of Belgium. These assurances I now repeat before the world, and I may add that, as long as Great Britain remains neutral, we would also be willing, upon reciprocity being assured, to take no warlike measures against French commercial shipping.

Gentlemen, so much for the facts. I repeat the words of the Kaiser: "With a clear conscience we enter the lists." We are fighting for the fruits of our works of peace, for the inheritance of a great past and for our future. The fifty years are not yet past during which Count Moltke said we should have to remain armed to defend the inheritance that we won in 1870. Now the great hour of trial has struck for our people. But with clear confidence we go forward to meet it. Our army is in the field, our navy is ready for battle — behind them stands the entire German nation — the entire German nation united to the last man.

INDEX AND PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY

NOTE.—The pronunciation of many proper names is indicated either by a simplified spelling or by their accentuation and division into syllables. The diacritical marks employed are those found in Webster's *New International Dictionary* and are the following:

ā as in āle.
å " " senåte.
â " " câre.
ă " " ăm.
ȧ " " ȧccount.
ä " " ärm.
ȧ " " ȧsk.
ȧ " " sofȧ.
ē " " ēve.
ȩ " " ȩvent.
ĕ " " ĕnd.
ĕ " " recĕnt.
ē " " makēr.
ī " " īce.
ĭ " " ĭll.
ō as in ōld.
ô " " ôbey.
ô " " ôrb.
ŏ " " ŏdd.
ŏ " " sŏft.
ŏ " " cŏnnect.
ū " " ūse.
û " " ûnite.
û " " ûrn.
ŭ " " ŭp.
ŭ " " circŭs.
ü " " menü.
o͞o " " fo͞od.
o͝o " " fo͝ot.
ou " " out.
oi as in oil.
ch " " chair.
g " " go.
ng " " sing.
ŋ " " iŋk.
th " " then.
th " " thin.
t͡u " " nat͡ure.
d͡u " " verd͡ure.
K for ch as in Ger. ich, ach.
N as in Fr. bon.
y " " yet.
zh for z as in azure.

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